



A Reply to A. V. Hall on the Names of Subsidiary Groups

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fusion in the future. Also it will be of interest to note whether there are any other such names in the *Index Kewensis* and *Supplements* that may have been noted by other users.

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A REPLY TO A. V. HALL ON THE NAMES OF SUBSIDIARY GROUPS

In *Taxon* (18: 375–377, 1969) A. V. Hall in a paper entitled “Giving Ranks and Names to Subsidiary Groups” argues against having coordinate infra-specific named groups. According to his example, if there is within the species *Taxonomica complexa* a compact “sibling” subgroup, this can be named as *T. complexa* subsp. *compacta*, and the “remainder” called merely *T. complexa*. According to him, this would give the user evidence that subsp. *compacta* is a homogeneous “sibling group.” This is an expression of an old idea, that there can be a species *and* a subspecies, as though they were mutually exclusive. This is contrary to present-day thinking and directly contrary to the Code, Art. 25, which states that a species is regarded as the sum of its subordinate taxa, and also that

when a subsp. *compacta* is proposed that a coordinate subsp. *complexa* is regarded as automatically proposed at the same time. I am sure that Dr. Hall is aware of this, but apparently he feels that the use of a name like subsp. *complexa* is misleading in that it implies that this subspecies is as compact and homogenous as subsp. *compacta*. However, this is by no means implied, and I do not recall of an instance in the literature where workers have been confused about it. The “subsp. *complexa*” is an arbitrary and artificial concept for the “remainder” left over after the segregation of var. *compacta*. Nothing at all is known about it other than it contains the nomenclatorial type of *T. complexa*; there is not at all the implication that this typical subspecies is homogeneous in the way that subsp. *compacta* is, and the opposite is likely to be true – that the “remainder” in subsp. *complexa* is highly heterogeneous, at least in the case of widespread and variable species.

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NEWS AND NOTES

A PROPOSAL FOR RECORDING OF PLANT INTRODUCTION EXPERIMENTS

This proposal is prompted by the recent discovery in the Kumasi area, by an assistant in the University herbarium, of a plant previously recorded only from the coastal region of Ghana. It was learned later that the species had been introduced by a laboratory technician in the Biology Department in order to ensure adequate regular supplies for teaching purposes.

Whilst indiscriminate transplanting is to be discouraged, especially in areas which are as yet relatively little known floristically, experimental studies in plant taxonomy often involve the introduction of plant material into habitats where the taxon concerned does not naturally occur. Clearly the chance discovery of introduced plants by other botanists could

lead to the publication of erroneous new records and range extensions, and possibly confuse later studies on geographical patterns of variation. To obviate this it is suggested that workers responsible for introducing plants to new localities, other than in recognised gardens, should send details of these introductions to a regional file. The file could then be consulted as a matter of routine by collectors making what appear to be new discoveries, and by workers embarking on field population studies.

The most practical system would be for each country, or each state or major region in very large countries, to have a recognised centre where a simple card index could be maintained. A card for each species (or other taxon) reported to have been introduced to a new habitat should show, as a minimum, the following information: