



Proposal to Change One of the Examples in Article 57

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Hydrophyllum, chosen by Hitchcock in 1929 when he cited the specific name for the standard species. The type of the generic name may be indicated in the following form “*Hydrophyllum* Linnaeus. Type: *H. virginianum* Linnaeus (lectotype).”

2. Example 2 of Proposal 115 of the Special Committee report (*Didymocarpus*).

3. In the protologue of the name *Picrodendron* Planchon included one species which he mistakenly called *P. arboreum* (Miller) Planchon based on *Toxicodendron arboreum* Miller, which is now considered synonymous with *Allophylus cobbe* (L.) Raesch. The type of the name *P. arboreum* may be rejected as the lectotype of the name *Picrodendron* since it is contrary to the protologue, despite the fact that the name *P. arboreum* was (mistakenly) published in the protologue.

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References

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PROPOSAL TO CHANGE ONE OF THE EXAMPLES IN ARTICLE 57

Summary

Eclipta alba (L.) Hassk. and *E. prostrata* (L.) L. appear to represent extremes of a single, highly variable taxon. The name *E. prostrata* (L.) L. was first used by Roxburgh (1832) when he combined *E. alba* and *E. prostrata*. The example given under Article 57 of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature states that Hasskarl (1848) was the first to unite these two taxa and that his choice of *E. alba* for the combined taxon must be followed. However, Roxburgh's choice of *E. prostrata* predates Hasskarl by 16 years and is the correct name when the two taxa are united.

The names *Eclipta alba* (L.) Hassk. and *E. prostrata* (L.) L. have been a source of confusion since their application by Linnaeus in 1753. An examination of specimens at A, CM, GA, GH, KYO, NCU, NY and US reveals that the use of these names has either been based on extremes of a single, highly variable taxon, or geographically assigned to plants from widely separated parts of the world. Linnaeus (1753) first described erect plants from the New World as *Verbesina alba* and procumbent plants from the Old World as *V. prostrata*. It is apparent from label data that this geographic separation continues to be followed by many botanists.

Linnaeus (1771) later transferred both to *Eclipta* and changed the name of *Verbesina alba* to *Eclipta erecta*. Hasskarl (1848) correctly reinstated the specific epithet *alba* and he has generally been followed to the present.

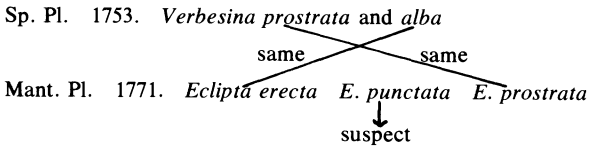
From the specimens we have examined we find that there is no clear break in characters between *Eclipta prostrata* and *E. alba*, but that the habit of these plants is greatly influenced by habitat. The single name which has priority when *E. alba* and *E. prostrata* are combined is *E. prostrata* (L.) L., first used by Roxburgh (1832) when he pointed out that the two taxa could not be maintained. His choice predates Hasskarl by 16 years, and according to the Rules of Nomenclature, must be followed when the two taxa are merged.

Roxburgh's statement “. . . *Verbesina prostrata* and *alba* Sp. Pl. 1272 and I suspect *E. erecta*, *punctata* and *prostrata*, are only one and the same species, or at most but accidental

varieties from age, soil and situation, . . .” is somewhat confusing and in need of clarification. Had Roxburgh not said “I suspect” then there would be no doubt about his intention to combine all of the above taxa under *Eclipta prostrata*. Roxburgh’s use and placement of “I suspect” seems to be an important factor here. Had he said “I suspect *Verbesina prostrata* and *alba* and *Eclipta erecta, punctata* and *prostrata* are only one and the same species . . .,” then it would be clear that he only assumed that those taxa were “one and the same” and it could not be taken as his intent to combine them at that time. But, his placement of “I suspect” following “. . . *Verbesina prostrata* and *alba* . . . and I suspect *E. erecta, punctata* and *prostrata* are only one and the same species . . .” seems to be a clear indication of his intent to combine *Verbesina prostrata* and *V. alba* under *Eclipta prostrata*, the only name he used in *Flora Indica*.

Roxburgh made direct reference to *Species Plantarum* and it can be inferred that he was aware of *Mantissa Plantarum* by his use of the names *Eclipta erecta*, *E. punctata* and *E. prostrata*, the only names under *Eclipta* in that publication. He would therefore have known that *Verbesina alba* and *Eclipta erecta* were one and the same. By combining *Verbesina prostrata* and *V. alba* Roxburgh was also aware that he was including *Eclipta erecta*. We believe, then, that Roxburgh’s use of “I suspect” only applies to *E. punctata*, a plant with which he was unfamiliar but which he thought might best be merged with *E. prostrata*.

Roxburgh’s reasoning follows a chronological order of publication and can be expressed diagrammatically.



We therefore propose that the example given in sentence 2, paragraph 7 of Article 57 be changed to the following: “However, the first author to unite these two was Roxburgh (*Fl. Ind.* 3: 438. 1832), who did so under the name *Eclipta prostrata* (L.) L., which therefore is to be used if these taxa are united and placed in the genus *Eclipta*.”

The pertinent synonymy is as follows: *Eclipta prostrata* (L.) L., *Mant. Pl.* 2: 286. 1771; Roxburgh *Fl. Ind.* 3: 438. 1832. *Verbesina prostrata* L., *Sp. Pl.* 902. 1753. Habitat in India. *Verbesina alba* L., *Sp. Pl.* 902. 1753. Habitat in Virginia, Surinamo. *Eclipta erecta* L., *Mant. Pl.* 2: 286. 1771, nom. superfl., *Verbesina alba* in synonymy. *Eclipta alba* (L.) Hassk., *Pl. Jav. Rar.* 528. 1848.

Distribution: A pantropical weed in both the Old and New World and northward into temperate regions.

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