Case 2711

Shoemakerella Pirlot, 1936 (Crustacea, Amphipoda): proposed designation of Lysianax cubensis Stebbing, 1897 as the type species

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is the designation of the nominal species Lysianax cubensis Stebbing, 1897 as the type species of Shoemakerella Pirlot, 1936, a genus of lysianassoid amphipod. The original designation was of a misidentified species. This proposal maintains Shoemakerella in its original meaning.

1. Pirlot (1936, p. 264) established the genus Shoemakerella and designated Lysianassa nasuta Dana, 1853 (p. 915) as the nominal type species, with Lysianax cubensis Stebbing, 1897 (p. 29) as a junior subjective synonym.

2. For the reasons given below we believe that Pirlot based his diagnosis of the genus on a misidentified type species, and we refer the case to the Commission in accordance with Article 70b of the Code.

3. Lysianassa nasuta was described from material collected at Rio de Janeiro by the U.S. Exploring Expedition 1838–1842. The type material is considered lost (T. Bowman, U.S. National Museum of Natural History, in litt.) and the species has not been re-collected from Rio de Janeiro despite recent attempts to find it (J. L. Barnard and J. D. Thomas, in litt.).

4. Lysianax cubensis was described from a single specimen in the Zoologisk Museum, Copenhagen, collected in Cuba. This type is also considered lost (T. Wolff, Zoologisk Museum, Copenhagen, in litt., and J. Ellis, British Museum (Natural History), in litt.). Lysianax Stebbing, 1888 is an unnecessary replacement name for Lysianassa H. Milne Edwards, 1830.

5. Shoemaker (1935) pointed out that Lysianassa cubensis had been misidentified as Lysianopsis alba Holmes, 1904. He recorded L. cubensis from Puerto Rico and Florida and re-illustrated some parts.

6. Pirlot (1936, pp. 256, 265) stated that he had identified Lysianopsis alba from material collected at Rio de Janeiro and this led him to think that perhaps Lysianopsis alba was a synonym of Lysianassa nasuta. He had written to Shoemaker about this possibility. Shoemaker sent material of Lysianopsis alba and Lysianassa cubensis to Pirlot, and replied that he [Shoemaker] had overlooked Dana’s Lysianassa nasuta and that in his opinion L. cubensis was a junior synonym of L. nasuta.

7. A comparison of the third uropods in the original illustrations of L. nasuta and L. cubensis is sufficient to show, however, that they are not conspecific. In L. cubensis the peduncle of uropod 3 is short, with a strong lateral flange, and the rami are short and strongly tapered; in L. nasuta the peduncle is longer, the flange is absent and the rami are longer and more cylindrical.
8. In his diagnosis of the genus Shoemakerella Pirlot (1936, p. 265) described uropod 3 as “court, présentant du côté externe et dorsal une expansion lamellaire”. This description fits L. cubensis but not L. nasuta. The diagnosis also described antenna 2 as being the same in both sexes, “(d’après Shoemaker)”, a character not reported for L. nasuta and known only from Shoemaker’s (1935, p. 234) report of L. cubensis. In designating the type species of Shoemakerella Pirlot wrote “Shoemakerella nasuta Dana, espèce redécrite ensuite par Stebbing sous le nom de Lysianax cubensis.” The conclusion is inescapable that Pirlot’s genus was in fact based on Stebbing’s figures of L. cubensis and the L. cubensis material sent to him by Shoemaker.

9. The species described by Dana as Lysianassa nasuta remains obscure. However, there is sufficient evidence to show that it does not fit Pirlot’s concept of Shoemakerella and probably belongs in either Lysianopsis or Lysianassa.

10. Shoemakerella has twice been placed in synonymy: with Lysianopsis Holmes, 1904 by Hurley (1963, pp. 70, 73), and with Lysianassa Milne Edwards, 1830 by Barnard (1969, p. 175). Both Hurley and Barnard specifically stated that their concept of Shoemakerella was based on L. cubensis.

11. We consider Pirlot’s concept of Shoemakerella, based not on the nominal type species Lysianassa nasuta Dana, 1853 but on actual specimens of Lysianax cubensis Stebbing, 1897, to represent a valid genus. We have several new species which should be assigned to this genus and we know of at least one other worker in a similar situation.

12. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

(1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all previous designations of type species for the nominal genus Shoemakerella Pirlot, 1936, and to designate as the type species Lysianax cubensis Stebbing, 1897;

(2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name Shoemakerella Pirlot, 1936 (gender: feminine), type species by designation in (1) above Lysianax cubensis Stebbing, 1897;

(3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name cubensis Stebbing, 1897, as published in the binomen Lysianax cubensis (specific name of the type species of Shoemakerella Pirlot, 1936).

References


