

**Case 3724 – *Metochus abbreviatus* Scott, 1874 (Insecta, Heteroptera):  
proposed precedence over *Rhyparochromus erosus* Walker, 1872  
(currently *Metochus erosus*)**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, is to conserve the widely used specific name *Metochus abbreviatus* Scott, 1874, for a species of rhyparochromid bugs from East Asia. The name is threatened by the senior subjective synonym *Rhyparochromus erosus* Walker, 1872, which has seldom been used since its first publication. Therefore, precedence of the name *Metochus abbreviatus* Scott, 1874 over *Rhyparochromus erosus* Walker, 1872 is proposed.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Heteroptera; Rhyparochromidae; *Metochus*; *Metochus abbreviatus*; *Metochus erosus*; East Asia.

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1. Walker (1872: 113) described a new species, *Rhyparochromus erosus* (Insecta, Heteroptera, Rhyparochromidae) from an unknown type locality.

2. Scott (1874a: 290; 1874b: 434) described a new species, *Metochus abbreviatus* from Japan. This species is the type species of the genus *Metochus* Scott, 1874, by monotypy.

3. *Rhyparochromus erosus* was largely ignored by subsequent authors. Lethierry & Severin (1894: 233) cited the species in its original combination but as of doubtful generic placement and Distant (1901: 504, 509) transferred it to *Dieuches* Dohrn, 1860. Based on a reexamination of the holotype, Scudder (1962: 769) transferred it to *Metochus*; the papers of Slater (1964: 1241) and Scudder (1967: 265) are the only two subsequent works that mentioned the species, both in this combination.

4. There has been unequivocal agreement about the identity of *Metochus abbreviatus* among subsequent authors. This species is widely distributed in East Asia (South Korea, China, Japan, Taiwan) (Kondorosy et al., 2016: 152), and it has frequently been cited in the literature. The wide usage of the name was demonstrated by Kondorosy et al. (2016: 152) by a compilation of 171 references published in the immediate preceding 50 years. In addition to numerous faunistic records, the bibliography of the species includes papers providing redescriptions, photos, or illustrations of diagnostic characters of adults (Hidaka, 1962: 88; Lee, 1971: 275; Eyles, 1973: 40; Kurosawa et al., 1973: 249; Hiura, 1977: 113; Zheng & Zou, 1981: 203; Chen, 1990: 135; Liu & Zheng, 1993: 159; Tomokuni, 1993: 196; Zhang et al., 1994: 74; Hu, 1995: 110; Dong et al., 1997: 246; Ueda & Yoshiyasu, 2001: 105; Xie & Bu, 2006: 229; An, 2010: 69; Ji et al., 2011: 210; Ishikawa, 2012: 237; Enju et al., 2013: 268; Zheng & Lin, 2013: 165; Ishikawa, 2014: 254; Kawabe, 2014: 286; Tamura, 2014: 19; Cai & Li, 2015: 161) and immatures (Hidaka, 1959: 224; Zheng & Lin, 2013: 165), host plant records and other information on various aspects of its bionomics (Takara, 1957: 54; Hidaka, 1959: 224; Kurosawa et al., 1973: 249; Kawasawa & Kawamura, 1975: 247; Hiura, 1977: 113; Zhou et al., 1992: 77; Tomokuni, 1993: 196; Hisai, 1995: 24; Hu, 1995: 110; Hua, 2000: 190; Wang et al., 2009: 2449; Ji et al., 2011: 210; Ishikawa, 2012: 237; Lan et al., 2012: 80; Enju et al., 2013: 268; Zheng & Lin, 2013: 165; Ishikawa, 2014: 254), treating its economic importance (Hu, 1995: 110), anatomy (Miyamoto, 1957: 73; Miyamoto, 1961: 214), behaviour (Hasegawa & Taniguchi, 1996: 91, 92; Matsuda et al., 2015: 3), and symbiotic microorganisms (Kikuchi & Fukatsu, 2003: 6084; Kikuchi et al., 2011: 449). The species name has been cited in general entomological textbooks (Ji et al., 2011: 210), handbooks on agricultural entomology (Chen, 1990: 135; Hu, 1995: 110), and popular insect books and field guides intended for a wide public audience (Hidaka,

1962: 88; Kurosawa et al., 1973: 249; Kawasawa & Kawamura, 1975: 247; Tomokuni, 1993: 196; An, 2010: 69; Ishikawa, 2012: 237; Ishikawa & Tomokuni, 2012: 358; Enju et al., 2013: 268; Zheng & Lin, 2013: 165; Ishikawa, 2014: 254; Kawabe, 2014: 286; Cai & Li, 2015: 161).

5. Based on the reexamination of the name-bearing types of both species, deposited in the Natural History Museum, London, Kondorosy et al. (2016: 157) proposed the subjective synonymy of *Metochus erosus* and *M. abbreviatus*.

6. After its original description, *M. erosus* has seldom been cited by subsequent authors. A discussion among heteropterists prior to preparation of the present application revealed that the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the community is that changing the name *M. abbreviatus* in its prevailing usage simply because of adherence to the Principle of Priority is undesirable and would threaten stability (cf. Article 23.2 of the Code). The number and authorship of the works using the junior name meet the conditions of Article 23.9.1.2, but the senior name was used as a valid name after 1899 (Scudder, 1962, 1967; Slater, 1964), thus, the ‘automatic’ conservation of *M. abbreviatus* under Article 23.9.2 is not possible. Therefore, the case is brought to the Commission under the provisions of Article 23.9.3.

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

- (1) to use its plenary power to give the specific name *abbreviatus* Scott, 1874, as published in the binomen *Metochus abbreviatus*, precedence over the specific name *erosus* Walker, 1872, as published in the binomen *Rhyparochromus erosus*, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Species Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *abbreviatus* Scott, 1874, as published in the binomen *Metochus abbreviatus*, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over the name *Rhyparochromus erosus* Walker, 1872 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
  - (b) *erosus* Walker, 1872, as published in the binomen *Rhyparochromus erosus*, with the endorsement that it is not to be given precedence over the name *Metochus abbreviatus* Scott, 1874 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.

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