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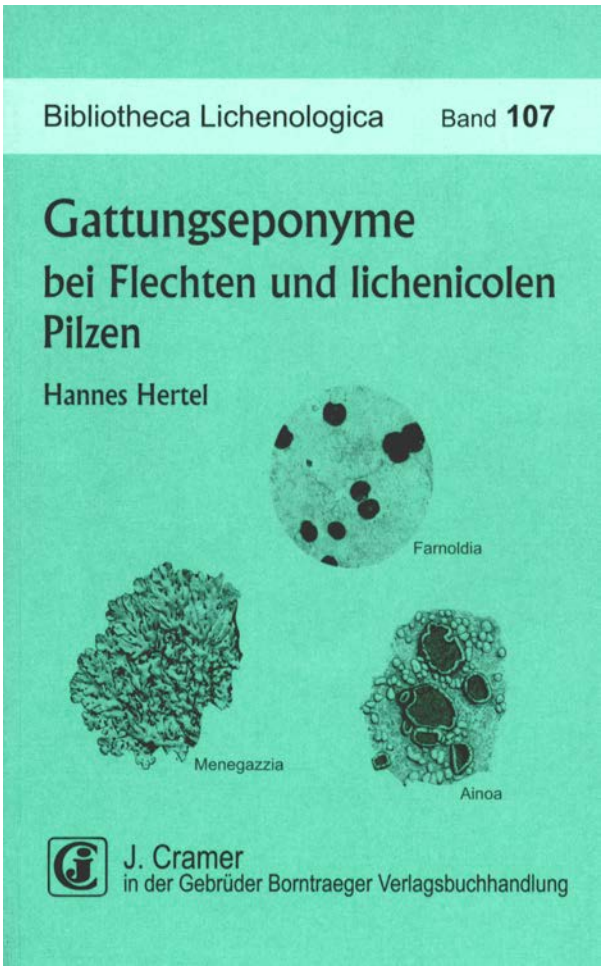
New Books

Hertel H. (2012): *Gattungseponyme bei Flechten und lichenicolen Pilzen*. Bibliotheca Lichenologica Band 107. J. Cramer in der Gebrüder Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart, 157 pp., 5 plates, 3 tables, paperback, size 22.5 × 14.1 cm. ISBN 978-3-443-58086-5; ISSN 1438-169 (Bibliotheca Lichenologica). Price: 39 €.



Eponyms are names derived from names of real or mythical persons and they are usually used as place names, but often also for minerals, chemical elements, and other entities, including genera of plants, fungi and animals. An eponym also means a real or mythical person from whose name another name is derived. In systematic botany the practice of showing marks of respect to persons in the names of genera has a long tradition and dates to the 1730s. In 1737 the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus in his opus *Critica botanica in qua nomina plantarum generica: specifica & variantia examini subjiciuntur, selectoria confirmatur, indigna rejiciuntur; simulque docrtina circa denominationem plantarum traditur. Seu Fundamentorum botanicorum pars IV* wrote: "*Nomina generica ad Botanici bene meriti memoriam conservandam constructa, sancta servo*". In the free translation it means: "It is a bounden duty to retain distinguished botanists in memory by immortalising them in the names of genera". In fact, Linnaeus put this idea into practice in 1735 when, in the first edition of his *Systema naturae*, he proposed several such generic names, for example *Bartsia* (in honour of Johann Bartsch, a prematurely deceased friend of his youth), *Scheuchzeria* (in praise of the Swiss naturalist Johann Jakob Scheuchzer), *Tillandsia* (in honour of Elias Tillands, a Swedish doctor of Åbo, now Turku in Finland) and *Rudbeckia* (for Olof Rudbeck, a professor of medicine and botany in Uppsala). These names were subsequently validated by Linnaeus himself in 1753 in his *Species plantarum*, an opus considered to be a starting point of nomenclature of most plants, algae and lichens. However, he changed the name *Rudbeckia* for *Linnaea* and in this way honoured his own name in the generic name of his favourite plant. In fact, the genus name *Linnaea* was first published by Linnaeus' teacher Jan Frederik Gronovius, a Dutch botanist, and Linnaeus only formalised this name under his modern system of botanical nomenclature. At the same time Linnaeus reassigned the name *Rudbeckia* to a well known genus of the Asteraceae.

The custom of coining eponymous generic names gained wide acceptance in botany and soon became prevalent in all groups of plants, algae and fungi. In lichenology the first generic eponyms were proposed in 1809 by E. Acharius. He honoured in this way William Borrer (1781–1862) who is considered the farther of British lichenology and Jean-Marie-Léon Dufour (1780–1865), a French mycologist with whom Acharius was in close touch and who donated to him numerous collections which included many new species. Acharius was followed by other students of lichens and consequently the number of generic eponyms increased down the years. As is often the case this practice started slowly, and in the first half of the nineteenth century only 19 generic eponyms were proposed, but a further 103 appeared between 1850–1909.

A certain nomenclatural stagnation took place in the first half of the twentieth century and between 1910–1949 a mere 55 eponyms were published, apparently resulting from an abatement of the activity in botanical studies during the two world wars. However, in the second half of the twentieth century another eruption in the formation of the generic eponyms in lichenology occurred and between 1950–2009 no less than 192 such generic names were coined. In total, from 1809 to 2011 some 379 genera of lichens were published whose names commemorated lichenologists or persons in some way associated with lichenology including collectors, botanists, naturalists, friends and/or family members.

All these eponyms have been tracked down and scrupulously set in the present book by Hannes Hertel, emeritus professor in the Botanical Municipal Museum in Munich (Botanische Staatssammlung München).

The book contains an alphabetic list of 287 persons after whom generic names of lichens and lichenicolous fungi are derived, some of these having more than one generic eponym. For each person a brief or extended biographical sketch is provided, which is usually accompanied by a quotation of the dedication taken from the original publication, containing a justification for establishing a given eponym. Thus this book may be considered as an abridged history of lichenology seen through the prism of the biographies of individual researchers or persons who in some way contributed to the description of eponymous genera. Hertel has painstakingly gathered the great amount of biographical data, through contacts with many people throughout the world and the consultation of numerous sources containing biographical details of the persons concerned. Surely, the vast personal contacts of the author in the lichenological community proved to be helpful, especially with colleagues he had often met at various conferences and symposia. A by-product of these meetings is a rich photographic collections of portraits of present-day lichenologists in the author's personal archive from which nearly 40 pictures of eminent students of lichens are reproduced in the present book.

The survey of eponyms occupies almost the entire book. It is preceded by a short introduction in which the author presents some interesting and absorbing statistics. For example, taking into consideration the sex of eponyms in lichenology, the statistics clearly indicate that this science is a male dominated realm because, of the 379 generic eponymous names, only 18 are dedicated exclusively to women. The situation is even more drastic if the problem is considered historically. Until 1949 only one genus, *Libertiella* Speg. & Roum., described in 1880, is named for a female, Anne-Marie Libert (1782–1865), a Belgian (Wallonian) naturalist of Malmedy. Until 1989 only five women attained the honour of receiving eponyms of generic names of lichens and lichenicolous fungi. The situation somewhat improved between 1990–2009 when an additional 13 eponymous lichen genera were dedicated to women.

In the introductory part various kinds of eponyms are discussed, because the inventiveness of the authors is quite immense in this field. Most eponyms are simply derived from surnames or Christian names, but sometimes they are formed from both elements, for instance *Josefpoeltia* S.Kondr. & Kärnfelt and *Peterjamesia* D.Hawksw. In some cases eponyms are dedicated together to two persons and then only some parts of their names are used, for example *Sagema* Poelt & Grube honours Sabine Miehe and Georg Miehe, and *Clarouxia* D.Hawksw. is an agglomeration of the elements of some parts of the surnames of Georges Clauzade and Claude Roux. Some eponyms are formed from initials and/or selected components of surnames and Christian names, for example the generic name *Heiomasia* Nelsen, Lücking & Rivas Plata is dedicated to the Dutch/German lichenologist Henricus Johannes Maria Sipman, and under the name *Wawea* Henssen & Kantvilas is hidden the American botanist and lichenologist William A. Weber of Boulder, Colorado. Finally, eponyms may be anagrams of surnames, for instance *Topelia* P.M.Jørg. & Vězda is an anagram of the generic name *Poeltia* Grolle (Gymnomitriaceae, Marchantiophyta) dedicated to Josef Poelt (1924–1995), one of the greatest lichelonogists in the history of the science and *Schrakia* Hafellner is an anagram of *Karschia* Körb., originally formed to honour the German doctor and botanist A. F. F. Karsch (1822–1892).

There are some interesting statistics which are not discussed by the author but which seem to be worthy of consideration. This includes the ranking of persons with the highest number of dedicated generic names. In this category the top position, with seven eponyms, is occupied by the Austrian lichenologist Josef Poelt. Second, is the German lichenologist J. A. Philip Hepp (1797–1867) with six eponyms. In third place comes the French lichenologist Georges Clauzade (1914–2002) for whom five generic names have been dedicated. It is necessary to mention that at the opposite pole there are some eminent students of lichens who never received eponyms of lichen generic names. This group is headed by E. Acharius (1757–1819), a Swedish botanist and one of the last disciples of C. Linnaeus, who initiated taxonomic studies on lichens and for that reason is considered to be the father of lichenology. In this group there are also such excellent lichenologists as Theodor M. Fries (1832–1913) from the famous clan of Swedish botanists, and author of, among other things, *Lichenographia scandinavica*; J. M. Crombie (1831–1906), the eminent British lichenologist and author of a monograph of British lichens and numerous papers on exotic lichens; and V. Gyelnik (1906–1945), the famous Hungarian lichenologist who tragically died in the last days of World War II, but who earlier described many lichen genera, ten of which were eponyms.

Of other interesting statistics it is worth mentioning lichenologists who described the highest number of dedicated generic names. This field is dominated by the British mycologist and lichenologist David L. Hawksworth, who is the author or co-author of 26 eponymous generic names. He is followed by the Italian lichenologist V. Trevisan (1818–1897), who proposed some 23 eponyms for lichen genera. These two researchers markedly outdistance the Italian botanist and mycologist R. Tomaselli (1920–1982), who described 17 genera honouring various persons, including 14 in co-authorship with R. Ciferri (1897–1964). The Silesian lichenologist G. F. Körber (1817–1885) and modern Austrian mycologist and lichenologist J. Hafellner have described 15 eponymous lichen genera each, whilst 13 have been authored by the Italian lichenologist A. B.

Massolongo (1824–1860). Twelve eponyms were introduced by the Austrian lichenologist A. Zahlbruckner (1860–1938), whilst the Hungarian V. Gyelnik and the American C. W. Dodge (1895–1988) described ten eponymous lichen genera each.

The book is a valuable contribution to lichenological and biohistorical literature. It reminds us of the many persons who have contributed so much to the development of taxonomic science on lichens and lichenicolous fungi. Unfortunately, in the present days such people are often forgotten because traditional systematics is neglected, being over dominated by phylogenetic studies based upon molecular techniques. These are undoubtedly valuable but without well trained taxonomists the harmonious development of knowledge on lichens (and other groups of organisms) is impossible, especially in studies of biodiversity. It is also useful to remember that because of the duality of the lichen thallus taxonomic studies on lichens have been not as forthcoming as, for example, those of bryophytes, but each year provides a lot of valuable discoveries of new taxa.

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