Nomenclature of European Plethodontid salamanders: *Speleomantes* Dubois, 1984 has precedence over *Atylodes* Gistel, 1868

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In a recent paper, Wake et al. (2005) unearthed *Atylodes*, a long forgotten nomen (see Dubois, 2000) proposed by Gistel in 1868 for the genus of the Sardinian Plethodontidae *Speleomantes genei* Temminck and Schlegel, 1838 (type species by monotypy). *Atylodes* Gistel, 1868 is thus an older, long forgotten, subjective synonym of *Speleomantes* Dubois, 1984 (type species *Speleomantes italicus* Dunn, 1923) if both are used for a taxon made of all European Plethodontid salamanders. The nomenclatural consequences of this discovery are not clearly exposed nor correctly tackled, however, since they fail to take the steps necessary to protect this nomen under the requirements of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (the Code hereafter) when *Atylodes* and *Speleomantes* are in concurrence to designate a taxon.

Article 23.9.1 of the Code specifies that “prevailing usage must be maintained when the following conditions are both met: 23.9.1.1 the senior synonym (...) has not been used as a valid name after 1899, and 23.9.1.2 the junior synonym (...) has been used for a particular taxon, as its presumed valid name, in at least 25 works, published by at least 10 authors in the immediately preceding 50 years and encompassing a span of not less than 10 years”. According to the Code (Article 23.9.2), an author who discovers that both the conditions of Article 23.9.1 are met should cite the two nomina together and state explicitly that the younger nomen is valid, and that the action is taken in accordance with this Article; at the same time the author must give evidence that the conditions in Article 23.9.1.2 are met, and also state that, to his or her knowledge, the condition in Article 23.9.1.1 also applies. Clearly, Wake et al. (2005) did not comply with these rules. The aim of this note is thus to follow the requirements of the Code to establish *Speleomantes* Dubois, 1984 as a nomen protectum and *Atylodes* Gistel, 1868 as a nomen oblil mum whenever both are in concurrence for a taxon of any rank in the genus group.

The paper by Wake et al. (2005) clearly establishes that *Atylodes* Gistel, 1868 has never been used as a valid nomen since 1899 except in their own paper: they provide evidence that Mertens (1936) cited it as a synonym of *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848, and Neave (1939) merely listed it as available but do not use it as the valid nomen of any taxon. The Code further states (Art. 23.9.6) that “the deliberate use of a name contrary to Article 23.9.1 [...] must not be taken into account in determining usage under Articles 23.9.1.1”. The use of the nomen *Atylodes* in Wake et al. (2005) clearly constitutes a deliberate use contrary to Art. 23.9.1: they rightly point out in the beginning of their paper that “the latest edition of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (1999) protects *Speleomantes*, which has been cited extensively since it was first proposed”, but nevertheless conclude that “the name of the subordinate clade [to *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848] would be *Atylodes*, which has priority over *Speleomantes*”. The condition in Article 23.9.1.1 thus applies.

The following works used *Speleomantes* as the valid nomen of the genus or subgenus including all European Plethodontidae: Batis-
toni et al. (1991); Ottaviani et al. (1992); Salvidio (1992, 1993); Salvidio et al. (1994); Bami et al. (1995); Serra et al. (1995); Van Rooy and Stumpel (1995); Jackman et al. (1997); Pinchera et al. (1997); Cinmaruta et al. (1999); Grossenbacher and Thiesmeier (1999); Andreone and Luiselli (2000); Landi (2000); Thireau and Dore (2000); Bagli (2001); Lanza and Leo (2001); Lanza et al. (2001); Pastorelli et al. (2001); Brizzi et al. (2002); Salvidio and Pastorino (2002); Sturla et al. (2003); Crochet and Dubois (2004); Greven et al. (2004). The conditions in Article 23.9.1.2 are thus also met.

In conclusion, in accordance with Article 23.9.1, Speleomantes Dubois, 1984 has precedence over Atylodes Gistel and Speleomantes is the valid nomen for the genus or subgenus that includes all European Plethodontidae salamanders. Of course, in accordance also with the Code, Atylodes may be used as valid whenever the nomina are not regarded as synonyms.

The nomenclatural consequences of this reversal of precedence will thus depend on the systematic choice for the classification of European Plethodontidae. If, as advocated by Wake et al. (2005), three subgenera are recognised within a large genus Hydromantes encompassing Californian and European species, their nomina should be Hydromantes (Hydromantes) for the Californian species, Hydromantes (Atylodes) for genei and Hydromantes (Speleomantes) for the other European species. If, however, two genera are recognised, in agreement with the reciprocal monophyly of the Californian and European species and in accordance with the most common current usage, their nomina should be Hydromantes for the Californian species and Speleomantes for the European species (with the two subgenera Speleomantes (Atylodes) and Speleomantes (Speleomantes)). Last, if one prefers to classify genei in a genus different from the other European species, the three genera should be called Hydromantes, Speleomantes and Atylodes.

The present action not only follows the recommendations of the current edition of the Code, it is also in agreement with the recent decision of the International Commission of Zoological (1997) to protect Speleomantes following a long discussion involving many authors including one of the authors of Wake et al. (2005; see references herein and Jennings et al., 1994; Dubois, 1995). It would be illogical to ignore now this decision grounded on the widespread use of the nomen Speleomantes for the European species.

References