

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Authors of fungal names

Dear Sir:

The attention of readers is directed to a publication which may have escaped their notice. This is *Authors of Fungal Names* (Kirk and Ansell 1992). In the past, many writers, when quoting authors of fungal names, have used the author citations as given by their predecessors. However, a comprehensive list of authors' names and recommended abbreviations is now available.

Authors of 'plant' names in the Tokyo Code

The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature (Tokyo Code) (Greuter *et al.* 1994) states in Article 46.1:

'For the indication of the name of a taxon to be accurate and complete...it is necessary to cite the name of the author(s) who validly published the name...'

Recommendation 46A.1 states:

'Authors' names placed after names of plants may be abbreviated unless they are very short...'

In Note 1 to 46A.5, it states:

'Brummitt and Powell's *Authors of Plant Names* (1992) provides unambiguous standard abbreviations...for a large number of authors of plant names...'

The 'plant' names include those of fungi and lichens with P.M. Kirk as the principal compiler.

Authors of fungal names

The authors of names of fungi with standard abbreviations in Brummitt and Powell (1992) were then published separately by Kirk and Ansell (1992). This latter publication lists 9288 names of authors of fungi and gives the recommended form of abbreviation, if any. It also gives the dates of birth and/or death, as applicable, for each. Where neither is available, the date when the author is first known to have published is given instead. Some of the points followed by Kirk and Ansell include:

'6. A surname only, or its abbreviation or contraction, is adopted as the standard form if it is applicable to only one author...'

'7. Persons with identical surnames are distinguished by the use of initials of forenames...Usually the earliest form is given without initials and all later ones with initials...'

For example, William Curtis (1746–1799) appears as 'Curtis' in the following list:

'J.T. Curtis
K.M. Curtis
M.A. Curtis
Curtis'

'...but in some cases a better known later author may be given without and all others, including the earliest, with initials.'

This has meant a change in form in some names, e.g. in the case of Paul Sydow (1851–1925) and Hans Sydow (1879–1946), the format used by Hawksworth (1980) was Sydow (= P. Sydow) and H. Sydow, whereas Kirk and Ansell (1992) use P. Sydow and Sydow (= H. Sydow).

'13(a) Names are usually not abbreviated unless more than two letters are eliminated and replaced by a full stop.'

Many of the abbreviations in common use remain the same, but some do change, e.g. for the fungus *Glomerella cingulata*:

Usually given as: (Stonem.) Spauld. & Schrenk
Kirk and Ansell (1992): (Stoneman) Spauld. & H. Schrenk

'(b) Names of authors living before the 20th century are more likely to be abbreviated than later ones...'

Personally, I think that names of some of the most well known authors living before, or overlapping, the 20th century, including, for example Fries, the Sydows, and Petrak, could well have been given in full rather than abbreviated to 'Fr.', 'Syd.' and 'Petr.', which entails negligible saving in space.

I am reminded of the difficulties experienced by writers, editors and readers when the names of journals, especially for pre-20th century references and little-known journals, had to be abbreviated.

The present practice of giving the journal names in full does use more space. However, its great advantage is that information is available on sight without further literature search, and this makes the use of full journal names well worthwhile. I feel somewhat the same regarding authors' names, viz. that completeness of the name – except perhaps for some of over three syllables – would ultimately be of advantage to writers, editors and readers alike.

In conclusion

While writers are not obliged to follow the list of Kirk and Ansell, the recommended standard forms of the names, including abbreviations, in this 1992 publication will probably be followed by more and more writers in the future.

References

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