

The Publication Dates of *Plecotus alpinus* Kiefer and Veith, 2002 and of *Plecotus microdontus* Spitzenberger, 2002

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Source: Acta Chiropterologica, 4(2) : 219-220

Published By: Museum and Institute of Zoology, Polish Academy of Sciences

URL: <https://doi.org/10.3161/001.004.0212>

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Received 23 June 2002, accepted 20 August 2002

The publication dates of *Plecotus alpinus* Kiefer and Veith, 2002 and of *Plecotus microdontus* Spitzenberger, 2002

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Key words: Chiroptera, *Plecotus alpinus*, *Plecotus microdontus*, priority

Recently, two new taxa of *Plecotus* E. Geoffroy, 1818, were described almost simultaneously as species group names: *Plecotus alpinus* Kiefer and Veith, 2002 and *Plecotus microdontus* Spitzenberger in Spitzenberger *et al.* (2002). Both names identify one and the same cryptic Alpine species. As one of the publication dates is apparently misleading, it is deemed necessary to establish the respective dates by which the two names became available, and which one is the senior name to be used for the Alpine *Plecotus* species.

(1) The issue of the journal ‘Myotis’ containing the description of *Plecotus alpinus* carries the date 31st December, 2001. However, this issue was actually mailed only on April 16th, 2002 (Editor Dr. R. Hutterer, ZFMK Bonn, in litt.). By this date the valid description and the scientific name *alpinus* became publicly available.

(2) A printed matter carrying on its top the quotation of the journal ‘Nat[ura]. Croat[ica]. / vol. 11 / No. 1 / 1–18 / Zagreb / March 31, 2002’, presents a paper by Spitzenberger *et al.*, containing the valid description and the scientific name

microdontus. This printed matter was mailed during May 2002 (post stamped in Vienna, 6 May 2002; R. Hutterer, in litt.) and is available from the authoress on request. Nevertheless, the complete issue of *Natura Croatica*, 11(1) has been mailed only on 6 June 2002 (post stamped in Zagreb, available in Frankfurt am Main, 10 June 2002) and no copies of this issue were available previously in the libraries of the Senckenberg Museum, Frankfurt am Main (by 17 May 2002), the Museum Koenig, Bonn (by 11 June 2002; D. Steinebach, in litt. 11 June 2002), or the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris (by 4 June 2002; A. Ohler, in litt. 4 June 2002). The Zoology Library, Natural History Museum, London, accessioned 'Myotis 39, part containing pp. 5–16' on 1 May 2002, but 'Natura Croatica 11, pt 1' only on 21 June 2002 (A. Datta, in litt. July 2002 to one of the reviewers). Since new publications are accessioned once a week, these journals could have been received up to six days earlier than the accession date.

According to information available, 'Natura Croatica' was expected to be printed around 8 June 2002 (M. Vuković, Secretary of *Natura Croatica*, Hrvatski Prirodoslovni Muzej, Zagreb, in E-mail to Dr. S. Lötters, 27 May 2002: 'will be printed in ca 10 days'), or 'Natura Croatica, vol. 11 (1) has been printed, but due to certain financial difficulties, it has not been yet distributed' (M. Vuković, in E-mail to the author, 4 June 2002), respectively has 'been printed according to its date on the cover, and the reprints were sent to authors after that, as we always get them later from the printing office, i.e., around May, 10' (M. Vuković, in E-mail to the author, 5 June 2002).

Thus the printed matter containing the name *microdontus* Spitzenberger is not a preprint with its own specified date of publication (ICZN, 1999: recommendation 21E; G), but a copy (uneven page numbers on left inner side in some of it) or offprint (separate) distributed in advance (ICZN, 1999: p. xxviii, 10d; article 21.8) of the date of the actual simultaneously obtainable publication of *Natura Croatica*, 11 (1) (contravening ICZN, 1999: article 8.1.2 and 8.1.3), even if previously deposited in libraries or other archives (ICZN, 1999: article 9.7). From the separate (offprint) of *Natura Croatica*, 11 (1), the new taxon *microdontus* is not available (ICZN, 1999: article 21.8).

The result is that in any case, be it by imprinted date in the issues of *Myotis* (31 December) or *Natura Croatica* (31 March), be it by actual availability of the respective issues containing the scientific names *alpinus* (16 April 2002) and *microdontus* (after 10 May 2002), the senior one is *Plecotus alpinus* Kiefer and Veith, 2002, definitely antedating *P. microdontus* Spitzenberger.

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Received 14 June 2002, accepted 30 October 2002