

Zeitschrift: Entomologica Basiliensia et Collectionis Frey
Herausgeber: Naturhistorisches Museum Basel, Entomologische Sammlungen
Band: 31 (2009)

Artikel: Onthophagus witteianus nom.nov. for Onthophagus wittei Frey, 1958 (nec Harold, 1867) from Congo (Coleoptera, Scarabaeidae)
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-981035>

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***Onthophagus witteianus* nom.nov. for *Onthophagus wittei* Frey, 1958
(*nec* Harold, 1867) from Congo (Coleoptera, Scarabaeidae)**

by Frank-Thorsten Krell

Abstract. *Onthophagus witteianus* nom.nov. is introduced for *Onthophagus wittei* Frey, 1958, a junior primary homonym of *Onthophagus wittei* Harold, 1867, currently *Phalops wittei* (Harold).

Keywords. Coleoptera – Scarabaeidae – *Onthophagus wittei* – *Onthophagus witteianus* nom.nov. – homonymy

Introduction

In 1958 Frey described the new dung beetle species *Onthophagus wittei* based on two specimens from Kaswabilenga in the former Belgian Congo (FREY 1958). He overlooked that this binomen had already been used by HAROLD (1867: 56) for a southern African species. *Onthophagus wittei* Frey, 1958 is a junior primary homonym of *Onthophagus wittei* Harold, 1867 and has no junior synonyms (KRAJCIK 2006: 142).

Harold's species was transferred to *Phalops* Erichson, 1848 by LANSBERGE (1883) where it has remained since (FERREIRA 1972; BARBERO *et al.* 2003; KRAJCIK 2006: 148). However, because *Phalops* was considered a subgenus of *Onthophagus* by several authors, the combination *Onthophagus wittei* Harold had been in use until fifty years ago (FERREIRA 1958, 1959).

Since the junior homonym *Onthophagus wittei* Frey has been included in an ongoing conservation assessment of the IUCN, it needs a valid name. *O. wittei* Frey has been used only infrequently (FERREIRA 1972: 777; KRAJCIK 2006: 142). The introduction of a replacement name is unlikely to cause nomenclatural confusion.

I propose the following nomen novum.

***Onthophagus witteianus* nom.nov.**

syn. *Onthophagus wittei* Frey, 1958 (*nec* Harold, 1867)

Etymology. This species was dedicated to Gaston François de Witte (1897–1980), Belgian herpetologist who led the expedition during which the type series was collected. I keep the dedication, but avoid homonymy with Harold's species name by changing the suffix.

Acknowledgements

I thank Philippe Moretto, Toulon, for checking a former version of this manuscript.

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