THE GENERIC NAMES *BLANKAARTIA* OUDEMANS,
1911, AND *TROMBICULOIDES* JACOT, 1938
(ACARI: TROMBICULIDAE) ¹

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The generic names of trombiculid mites have been studied recently by several acarologists. Two of the genera have been based on specimens that were incorrectly identified, so that they fall in the category of genera based on misidentified genotypes. The question of what to do concerning these names was referred to Mr. Francis Hemming, Secretary of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. In a letter, he indicated that the concluding portion of Opinion 168 (namely, the portion which states that, where a genus is considered by specialists to be based on a misidentified type species, that name is to be regarded as of doubtful status pending a definite ruling being given by the Commission in the light of data submitted to it by interested specialists) will be omitted from the revision of the rules of zoological nomenclature in which the opinions will be incorporated with the rules. It is therefore necessary either to apply the principle established in Opinion 168 that designations of type species for genera must stand, or to refer the case to the Commission for use of their plenary powers to suspend the rules. Since the Commission can use its plenary powers only when strict application of the rules will result in greater confusion than uniformity, the type designations for the genera *Blankaartia* and *Trombiculoides* must be accepted.

Oudemans, 1911, designated *Trombidium niloticum* Trägårdh, 1904, as type of a new genus *Blankaartia* (Ent.

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Ber. 3:123). His description of the genus was based on specimens purported to be the larvae of *Trombidium niloticum* by Trägårdh, although Trägårdh stated that the evidence associating these larvae with adults of *Trombidium niloticum* was circumstantial and therefore not conclusive. In fact, these larvae can now be recognized as belonging in a different family from the adults. However, according to the rules *Blankaartia* must retain as genotype *Trombidium niloticum* Trägårdh, 1904.

Berlese, 1912, proposed the subgeneric name *Trägårdhula* with the type *T. nilotica* (Träg.) (Redia 8:4). Since *Blankaartia* and *Trägårdhula* are based on the same type species they are synonyms.

Thor, 1936, proposed the generic name *Pentagonella* with *Trombidium ardeae* Trägårdh, 1904, as type. On the basis of morphological characteristics and geographical considerations it is quite possible that *T. ardeae* and *T. niloticum* are synonyms. However, only rearing experiments will be able to establish their identity. The work of Michener, 1946, has demonstrated that *T. niloticum* and *T. ardeae* are congeneric if not conspecific. Therefore *Pentagonella* Thor, 1936, is also a synonym of *Blankaartia*.

Michener, 1946, reports rearing specimens of *Trombicula* (*Megatrombicula*) *alleei* Ewing, 1926; *Trombicula* (*Megatrombicula*) *velascoi* Boshell and Kerr, 1942; and *Trombicula* (*Megatrombicula*) *attenuata* Michener, 1946. These species he places in the subgenus *Megatrombicula* Michener, 1946, with *Trombicula alleei* Ewing, 1926, as type. These three species are also congeneric with *T. niloticum*.

Womersley, 1948, added to the confusion by trying to settle the problem in his own manner without proper regard for the International Rules on Zoological Nomenclature. He accepts as the genotype of *Blankaartia* the species represented by the larva thought to be *Trombidium niloticum* Trägårdh by Oudemans. He refers to this species as *Blankaartia nilotica* (Träg.) on page 83 and as *Blankaartia nilotica* (Ouds.) on page 84. Actually the species represented by these larvae does not yet have a name. In the same paper Womersley used *Trägårdhula nilotica* as the valid name for *Trombidium niloticum* Trägårdh.

As for the generic names involved, strict application of the rules of priority leads to the following conclusion. *Blankaartia* Oudemans, 1911 (Type *Trombidium niloticum* Trägårdh, 1904) has priority over *Trägårdhula* Berlese, 1912 (Type *Trombidium niloticum* Trägårdh, 1904); *Pentagonella* Thor, 1936 (Type *Trombidium ardeae* Trägårdh, 1904); and *Megatrombicula* Michener, 1946 (Type *Trombicula alleei* Ewing, 1938). All of these names should be applied at the subgeneric level at the present time. The proper name of the species named *Trombidium niloticum* by Trägårdh is therefore *Trombicula* (*Blankaartia*) *nilotica* (Trägårdh), 1904.

The species represented by the larvae associated with *T. nilotica* (Trägårdh) has never been named. It is therefore necessary to name this species. It is a trombidiid and probably belongs to the subfamily Microtrombidiinae. The adult must be known before the species can be assigned with certainty to a subfamily.

Pseudoblankaartia n. gen.

Pseudoblankaartia is characterized by Oudemans, 1912, Zool. Jahrb., Supp. 14: 118-119 under the name *Blankaartia*. The type of *Pseudoblankaartia* n. gen. is hereby designated as *Pseudoblankaartia bequaerti* n. sp.

Pseudoblankaartia bequaerti n. sp.

P. bequaerti is characterized by Oudemans, 1912, Zool. Jahrb., Supp. 14: 119-122 + Figure H. As type of the species we designate the specimen from which Oudemans prepared Figure H.

A similar but less confusing condition exists in the case of *Trombiculoides* Jacot, 1938. Wharton, 1948, explains the details. Now that the portion of Opinion 168 mentioned above has been repudiated, Ewing's 1946 solution of the problem is correct and *Trombiculoides* Jacot, 1938 should be considered a synonym of *Sericothrombium* Berlese, 1910.

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