

## On the species names of some British millipedes

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### Introduction

The dates when the species descriptions, made by Leach in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, of some British centipedes and millipedes were published are discussed at some length in another article in this bulletin (Barber and Read, 2023). One of the species is that referred to in current checklists, such as on the British Myriapod and Isopod Group website, as *Craspedosoma rawlinsii*, and this has been the subject of recent discussion regarding its spelling (Dolejš & Kocourek, 2019).

### *Craspedosoma rawlinsii* or *raulinsii*?

In the original description by Leach (1813-1815) the species is clearly spelled *Craspedosoma Raulinsii* with a “u” although everywhere else in the text Leach uses a “w”. It is also clearly stated that the species was named to commemorate Richard Rawlins, an entomologist with whom Leach had worked, however Rawlins’ actual name was spelt with a “w”. Although the spelling *rawlinsii* has been that in general circulation in British literature, Jeekel (1970), Hoffman (1999) and more recently McAlpine & Shear (2018) have pointed out that the original spelling of *Raulinsii* should be the correct one. McAlpine & Shear (2018) give a much fuller account including a detailed discussion regarding Leach and his competency in Latin, pointing out that the letter W is not present in the Roman alphabet and also discussing why he might have changed the spelling at a later date. Dolejš & Kocourek (2019) also discussed this subject but retained the use of the spelling *rawlinsii* recommending that a case should be put to the Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to keep the accepted spelling.

It appears that there is no valid argument for emending the spelling of a species name because it does not agree with that of a name of a person for whom the species was described and that the original spelling as published by the author, regardless of any typos or misspellings, should be adopted. Therefore, despite the fact that MilliBase (Sierwald & Spelda, 2023) gives the form “*raulinsii*” as “unaccepted” and accepts *Craspedosoma rawlinsii* the correct spelling should be *raulinsii* (with a lower case *r*).

### *Cylindroiulus latestriatus* or *latistriatus*?

It seems that the history of the name of this species is somewhat similar to that of *Craspedosoma raulinsii*. In the original description by Curtis in 1845, the first mention of the species is given as *Julus latistriatus*, although subsequent mentions in the same paper use the spelling *latestriatus*. This original spelling was used by Brade-Birks & Brade-Birks (1919) and was also reinstated by Jeekel in 2002, with the relevance of this highlighted to HJR some years ago by Bob Mesibov (pers. comm). As above, since the original description was clearly linked to the spelling *latistriatus*, this should be the correct version used. MilliBase (Sierwald & Spelda, 2023) lists a large number of synonyms for this species, but all the spellings are listed as *latestriatus* rather than *latistriatus*.

### i or ii at the end of names?

There has also been some debate about the use of -ii at the end of species names. In the time of Leach, when those describing species were fluent in Latin, it was common practice to Latinise names so, when

naming species after a person, for a man the name would end in -ius and the grammatically correct Latin derivative would be to end in -ii, hence *raulinsii*.

Today, people do not generally learn Latin and are much less familiar with the language. The practice of Latinising people's names is now generally obsolete and it is widely accepted that a species named for a man would end in a single -i. The use of -ii would only be made if the person's name ended in an i. For older names, the form, -i or -ii, as used the original description should be used.

## Conclusion

In the forthcoming revision of the 1985 synopsis (Blower, 1985) it is intended the species names will be spelled as follows:

*Craspedosoma raulinsii* and *Cylindroiulus latistriatus*.

## References

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