

The Code - Albus Dumbledore or Severus Snape?

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Purpose: The International Code of Nomenclature for Algae, Fungi and Plants (ICN) contains the rules and recommendations dictating the naming of fungi. However, strict application of some articles result in species being invalid even though the species appears to be validly published to a non-specialist. Examples include articles 40.7 (only a single type specimen may be indicated) and 40.8 (must include a statement that the culture is preserved in a metabolically inactive state); especially the combination of these two where the same culture is listed in multiple culture collections as type is problematic. Another example is article 32.1 (conditions for validly publishing a taxon name), which excludes the use of a name in a new combination if the name itself was invalidly published. Some of these articles effectively invalidate names that are commonly accepted by users.

Methods: Examples were obtained from different ranks that are indicated as invalid in MycoBank or Index Fungorum. The original publication was checked to confirm why the name is invalid, as well as any subsequent publications aimed at validating the name in question.

Results and conclusions: Quite a number of species currently indicated as invalid can easily be corrected by simply redescribing them with e.g. only citing a single specimen/culture number. However, there are no rules determining who the author of this species should then be or whose responsibility it should be. Some good practices and suggestions to resolve nom. inval. cases are discussed.