

(1348) Proposal to reject the name *Sempervivum carpathicum* (Crassulaceae)Roman Letz¹

- (1348) *Sempervivum carpathicum* Wettst. ex Prodan, Fl. Român. 1: 530. 1923 [Crassul.], nom. utique rej. prop.
 Neotype (designated here): “*Sempervivum carpathicum* Wettst. Die Exemplare, nach der ich die Diagnose anfertigte. Tatra. Kl. Kohlbachthal”, 1500 m, 30 Jun 1899, *Wettstein* (WU).

In preparing a revision of the *Sempervivum montanum* group (Letz, in prep.) I found that *S. montanum* L. s. str. (described from the Swiss Alps, cf. Letz & Marhold in Taxon 45: 111-116. 1996) does not occur in the Carpathians. The populations of *S. montanum* s. l. of the Carpathians represent a distinct species that is differentiated into two morphologically, chorologically and ecologically distinct subspecies. The “upland” taxon is usually called *S. montanum* subsp. *montanum*. The “lowland” one was usually called *S. montanum* subsp. *carpathicum*. The taxonomic status of the latter has been uncertain (cf. Favarger & Zésiger in Tutin & al., Fl. Eur. 1: 354. 1964; Parnel in Acta Bot. Hung. 34: 221. 1988; Parnel & Favarger in Tutin & al., Fl. Eur., ed. 2, 1: 427. 1993; Lippert in Hegi, Ill. Fl. Mitt.-Eur., ed. 3, 4(2a): 89. 1995).

The binomial *Sempervivum carpathicum* first appeared as a nomen nudum on a printed label, when Wettstein (in Kerner, Fl. Exs. Austro-Hung. No. 3677; reprinted in Kerner, Sched. Fl. Exs. Austro-Hung. 10: 25. 1913) noted under *S. montanum*: “in den Karpathen erscheint *S. carpathicum* Wettst.” Wettstein was referring to the neotype specimen designated above, and he clearly intended to publish *S. carpathicum* based on this upland specimen – but he never did, as noted by Janchen (in Oesterr. Bot. Z. 82: 56. 1933): “Das Manuskript einer Monographie von *Sempervivum* lag seit Jahren nahezu fertig in seinem Schreibtisch. Es vollkommen abzuschließen fand er nicht mehr die Zeit und Ruhe.” Although this manuscript was not found in Wettstein’s archives (in the University of Vienna Archives) the specimen at WU is sufficient to establish Wettstein’s notion of *S. carpathicum*.

Prodan (l.c.) used the name *Sempervivum carpathicum*, ascribing it to Wettstein, for plants from the Romanian Carpathians so far known as *S. montanum*. He provided his usual short species description and thus, perhaps unintentionally, validly published the name. A type should be selected from material studied by Prodan prior to 1923. However, it was impossible to find such a specimen at BUCA or CLA, where Prodan’s main collections are deposited (Vegter in Regnum Veg. 109: 714. 1983). In BUCA, two specimens from Rodna Mts seen by Prodan were labelled by him as *S. montanum* L. (Dihoru in litt.). Prodan’s work pertains to the Romanian Carpathians, where the only the upland taxon occurs. Therefore the name *S. carpathicum* Wettst. ex Prodan cannot be typified by a specimen corresponding to the lowland taxon (endemic to the West Carpathians). In accordance with Wettstein’s and Prodan’s concept the upland specimen in WU is designated here as the neotype.

¹ Institute of Botany, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Dúbravská cesta 14, SK-842 23 Bratislava, Slovakia.

Hayek (in Hegi, Ill. Fl. Mitt.-Eur. 4(2): 554. 1922) referred to “*Sempervivum montanum* subsp. *Carpaticum*” but did not validate that combination. The mention of “subsp. *carpaticum* Wettst.” by A. Berger (in Engler & Prantl, Nat. Pflanzenfam., ed. 2, 18a: 422. 1930), including an indirect reference (Art. 32.5) to the basionym *S. carpaticum*, did however validate the combination *S. montanum* subsp. *carpathicum* (Wettst. ex Prodan) A. Berger. The combination *S. montanum* var. *carpathicum* (Wettst. ex Prodan) Domin (in Rozpr. České Akad. Věd, Tř. 2, Vědy Mat. Přír. 42: 28. 1933, ‘*carpaticum*’) was similarly validated, whereas the same combination by Praeger (Acc. Sempervivum: 46. 1932) is invalid under Art. 34.1.

The name *Sempervivum montanum* subsp. *carpathicum*, as here typified, was misapplied to the lowland taxon in many works, e.g.: Pawłowska in Szafer & Pawłowski, Fl. Polska 7: 50. 1955; Favarger & Zésiger, l.c.; Zahradníková in Bertová, Fl. Slovenska 4(2): 197-199. 1985; Dostál, Nová Květ. ČSSR 1: 386. 1989; Dostál & Červenka, Velký Klíč Urč. Vyšš. Rastlín 1: 385. 1991; Parnel & Favarger, l.c.; Lippert, l.c.; and Valachovič, Rastl. Spoloč. Slovenska 1: 35, 86, 92, 96. 1995.

Jávorka (Magyar Fl. 2: 456. 1924) treated *S. carpaticum* as a synonym of *Sempervivum montanum* [unranked] *heterophyllum* (Hazsl.) Jáv. (*S. montanum* subsp. *heterophyllum* (Hazsl.) Jáv. ex Soó in Veröff. Geobot. Inst. ETH Stiftung Rübel Zürich 6: 246. 1930). That name pertains to the lowland taxon, and Jávorka’s synonymy triggered the subsequent misapplication of names with the epithet *carpathicum*, starting with Dostál (Květena ČSR 2: 536. 1950).

If *Sempervivum carpaticum* were typified by a specimen of the lowland taxon, *S. montanum* subsp. *carpathicum* (May 1930) and *S. montanum* subsp. *heterophyllum* (1930) would compete for priority at subspecies rank. The latter name cannot be exactly dated as the editors of the journal kept no corresponding records (Kollmann and Fenner, in litt.), nor do accession dates in libraries (e.g. WU, PRC, G) help. The preface, by Rübel, is dated June 1929, so that *S. montanum* subsp. *heterophyllum* may well have been validated before May 1930.

There are two possible solutions to these problems: (1) To reject the name *Sempervivum carpaticum* under Art. 56, as here proposed. The upland taxon will then have to be described as a new species, with the lowland taxon transferred to it as subsp. *heterophyllum*. (2) To conserve *S. carpaticum* with a conserved “lowland” type under Art. 14.9. The first option is however preferred because, for those placing both the lowland and upland taxon as subspecies of *S. montanum*, it makes the question of priority irrelevant.

If the proposal is rejected, the upland taxon will, confusingly, become known as *Sempervivum carpaticum* subsp. *carpathicum*, and the lowland taxon will have to be named subsp. *heterophyllum*, a combination that does not yet exist.

Acknowledgements

I thank Karol Marhold (SAV) for discussion and helpful comments, the reviewer of this proposal for valuable observations, and the curators of the herbaria W and WU who helped to find Wettstein’s specimen. This work was supported by the Grant Agency for Science, Bratislava, Slovakia (Grant No. 2032) and the Ministry for Science and Research, Vienna, Austria (through the programme “Austria-Slovakia” in 1996, and the project OWP-58).