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On the spelling of *Antrechinus nordenskjoldi* (Echinodermata: Echinoidea)*

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We dedicate this paper to the memory of Hans G. Hansson

Introduction

The spelling of organism names seems to be a trivial matter. A brief glance at the scientific literature, however, shows that it is far from that. In some cases, delving into these seemingly minor or even unimportant issues of spelling can turn up historical information germane to our science. Apart from simple misspellings and printing errors, differing ideas about the formation of names and the late onset of regulations (ICZN, ICBN) covering the naming and use of names are sources for different spellings. It was not until 1905 that a first internationally accepted version of what we now know as “the Code” was published under the name “*Règles internationales de la Nomenclature Zoologique adoptées par les Congrès Internationaux de Zoologie*”. The Code kept being emended after this first attempt to provide a unified set of rules for the naming and treatment of names and today, for animals, the 4th edition of *the Code* is valid (ICZN 1999).

The availability of such a rigid framework as represented by *the Code* for the correct use of both old and new names does not automatically mean that all names are used correctly today. A common source of error is neglecting to consult the original paper in which a name was first proposed. Thus errors introduced early in scientific literature are often perpetuated. Rectification of such well-ingrained, but wrongly spelled names is desirable on the one hand, but potentially undermines the stability of nomenclature on the other. Here we present a case of an echinoid name widely used in a form differing from the original spelling and the correct use of which proved to be an especially hard “nut to crack”. The circumstances of history that caused the confusion are also of interest.

Antrechinus nordenskjoldi (Mortensen, 1905), an extant deep-water echinoid of the group Holasteroidea (which includes some of the most bizarre extant echinoid species, see Mooi & David 1996), was originally established as “*Plexechinus Nordenskiöldi*”. Although no etymology was given in the original or any subsequent papers, the species was almost undoubtedly named in honour of Otto Nordenskjöld, leader of the Swedish South-Polar Expedition from 1901 to 1903 during which the type