



Keeping Up With Names: The Global Bat Taxonomy Working Group



Nancy B. Simmons (simmons@amnh.org) and members of the Global Bat Taxonomy Working Group

Who Are We?

We are a committee of the IUCN Bat Specialist Group tasked with keeping up with changes to bat taxonomy, adjudicating taxonomic problems and disputes, and maintaining a comprehensive list of valid bat taxa and synonyms.

We maintain the *Batnames.org* database ("Bats of the World: A Taxonomic and Geographic Database") to deliver taxonomic information to the scientific community.



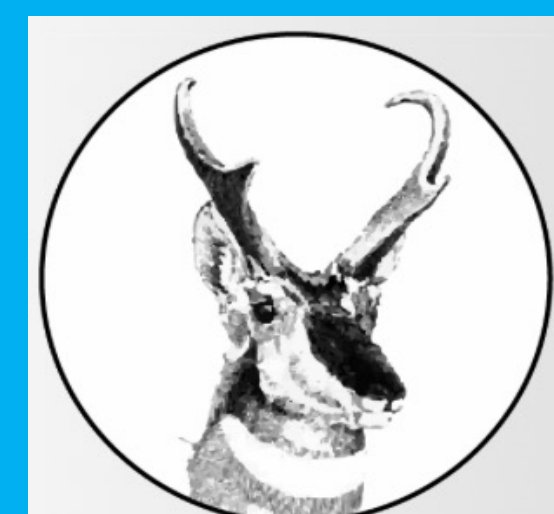
Taxonomy problems? We can help!

Membership & Collaborations



The Global Bat Taxonomy Working Group currently consists of taxonomy experts and specialist users from 15 countries.

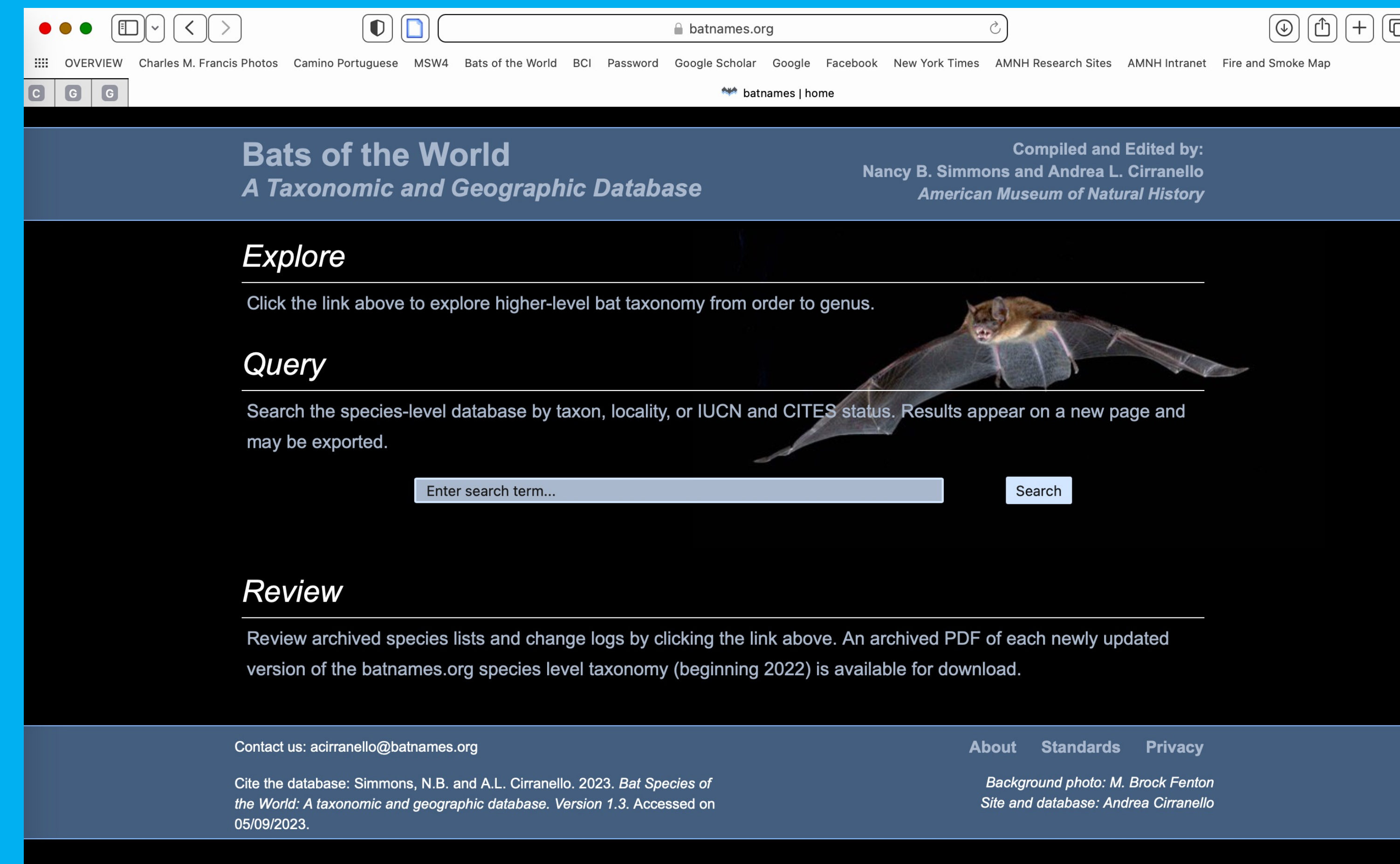
The GBTWG works closely with the ASM Mammal Diversity Database (MDD; <https://www.mammaldiversity.org>) to ensure consistency between *Batnames* and the MDD. We publish decision papers on more complex issues on Zenodo to make criteria for decisions transparent to the scientific community.



The Batnames Database

The *Batnames* database provides an up-to-date and authoritative species-level classification of bats that reflects the decisions of the Global Bat Taxonomy Working Group. It effectively replaces the Simmons (2005) classification.

<https://batnames.org>



The database can and should be cited in publications!

Mormoops megalophylla (Peters, 1864).
 Monatsb. K. Preuss. Akad. Wiss. Berlin 1864: 381.
 Peters's Ghost-faced Bat

Original name combination: *Mormoops megalophylla*.

Synonyms:

- carteri* Smith, 1972.
- intermedia* Miller, 1900.
- megalophylla* Peters, 1864; *rufescens* Davis & Carter, 1962; *senicula* Rehn, 1902.
- tumidiceps* Miller, 1902.

Type locality: Mexico, Coahuila, Parras.

Distribution: S Texas, S Arizona (USA) and Baja California (Mexico) south to NW Peru and N Venezuela; Aruba, Curaçao, and Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles); Trinidad; Margarita Is. (Venezuela).

Status: CITES - Not listed. IUCN - Least Concern (2016).

Comments: See Rezsutek and Cameron (1993). Observed in Costa Rica; see York et al. 2020.

References:

Peters, H.W. 1864. Hr. W. Peters berichtete über einige neue Säugethiere (*Mormoops*, *Macrotus*, *Hesperus*, *Molossus*, *Caproniys*), Amphibien (*Platydictylus*, *Otocryptis*, *Euprepes*, *Ungalia*, *Dromicus*, *Tropidonotus*, *Xenodon*, *Hylodes*) und Fische (*Silago*, *Webastes*, *Channa*, *Mycotophum*, *Carassius*, *Barbus*, *Capoeta*, *Poecilia*, *Saurenhchylus*, *Leptocephalus*). Monatsberichte der Königlich Preussische Akademie des Wissenschaften zu Berlin 1864: 381-399. Read article.

Rezsutek, M., and G.N. Cameron 1993. *Mormoops megalophylla*. *Mammalian Species* 448: 1-5. Read article.

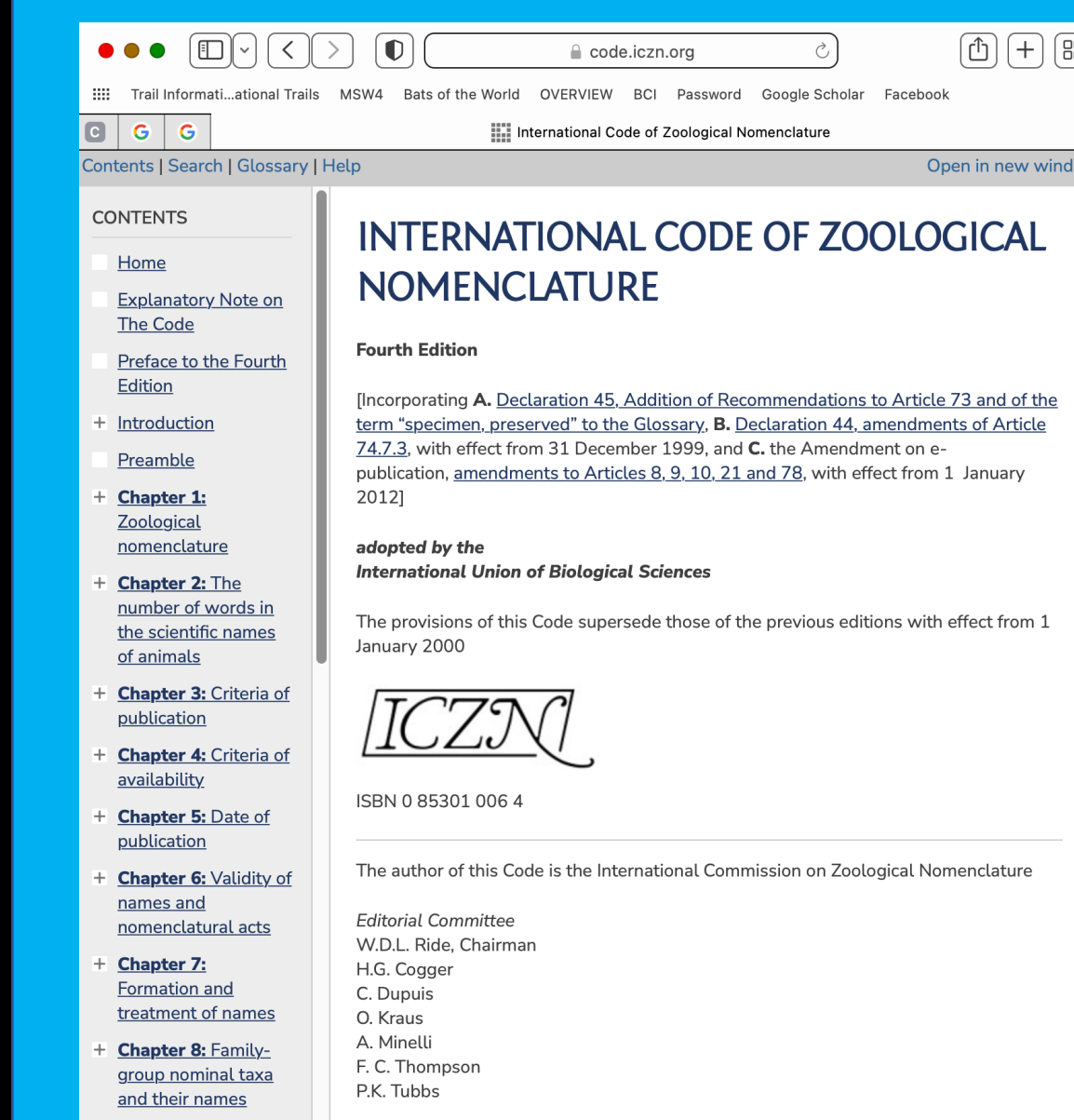


An example of long entry for a species. Many records do not contain maps or publicly available synonym lists yet, but these data are available upon request.

For more information and a list of members, visit our website at <https://www.iucnbsg.org/global-bat-taxonomy-working-group.html>



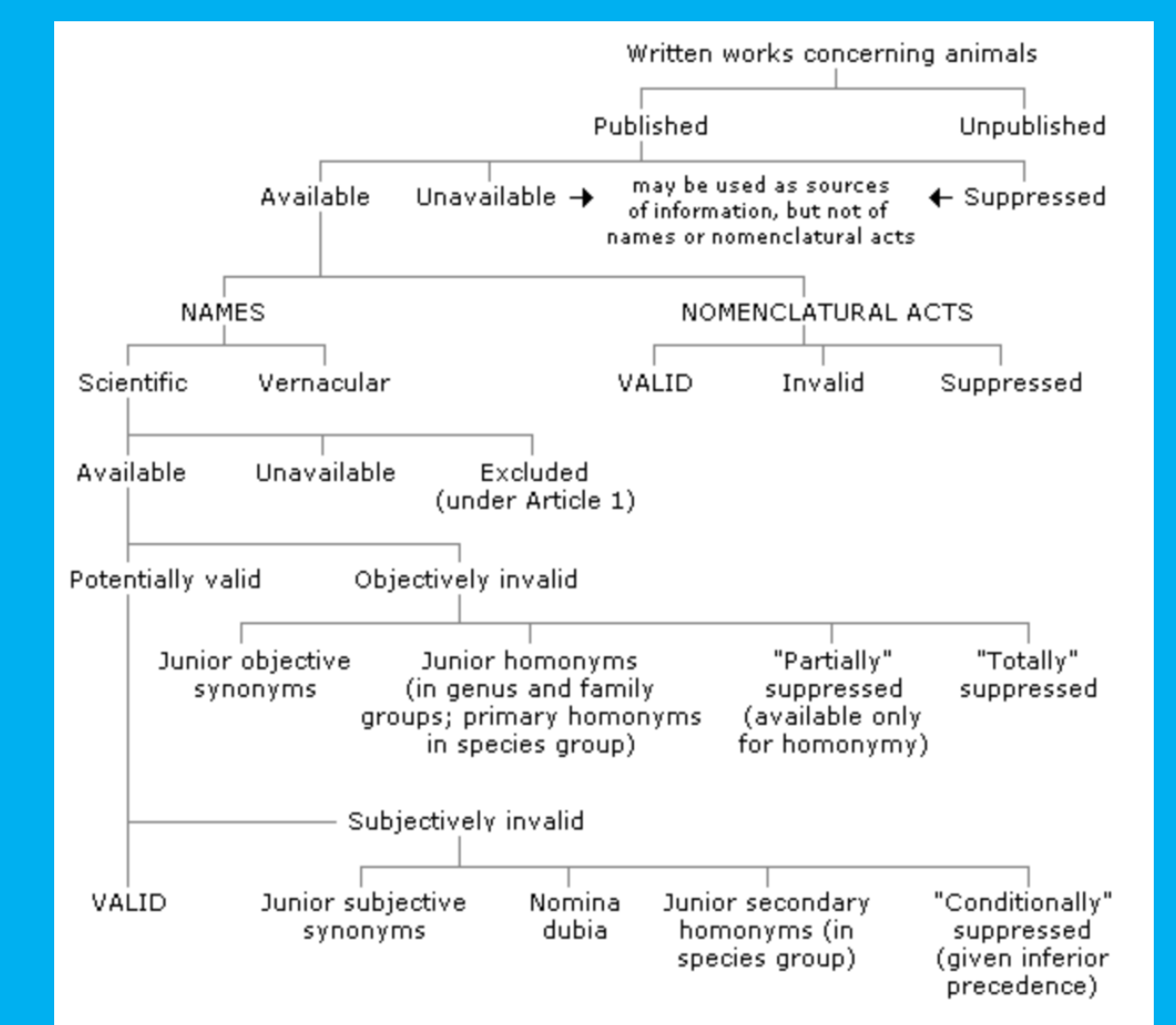
Applying the Rules of Zoological Nomenclature



The International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) is a widely accepted convention that governs the formal scientific naming of animals. The GBTWG seeks to balance the opinions of individual researchers with the need for a stable taxonomy while following the guidelines of the ICZN.

Modern analytical methods, especially molecular data and statistical analyses, have resulted in many taxonomic problems in cases where bat species have been split and/or hybrid zones recognized.

- We seek to:
- Track all scientific names ever applied to bats
 - Determine which name(s) apply to each distinct species and subspecies
 - Determine which is the valid name for each taxon (and which are junior synonyms)



How Many Bat Species Are There?

The number of valid species of bats recognized by the Global Bat Taxonomy Working Group as of January 2024 is

1,474 species

This number is updated twice a year (usually in January and July) and is available for citation on the *Batnames* database.