

NOTE ON THE SYNONYMY OF *DAVIDIUS ATER* HAGEN IN SELYS, 1878 WITH *D. NANUS* (SELYS, 1869) (ANISOPTERA: GOMPHIDAE)

We recently noticed that the Japanese taxon *Davidius ater* Hagen in Selys, 1878 has generally remained listed as a valid species in recent world Odonata catalogues. Its retention is an artefact of the rather complicated taxonomic history of the Japanese *Davidius* taxa. In his "Les odonates du Japon", the first synopsis of the Japanese odonates, E. DE SELYS LONGCHAMPS (1883, *Annls Soc. ent. Belg.* 27: 82-143) lists two *Davidius* species, '*Davidius nanus* Selys' and '*Davidius ? ater* Hagen' referring to the original descriptions. The former species had been described by Selys as *Hagenius ? nanus* from a single female specimen from "Japon" in E. DE SELYS LONGCHAMPS (1869, *Bull. Acad. r. Belg.* (II) 28: 168-208 and the latter by Hagen on the basis of incomplete (tips of abdomen missing) male and female specimens from Jeddo [Tokyo] in E. DE SELYS LONGCHAMPS (1878, *Bull. Acad. r. Belg.* (II) 46: 408-471, 658-698).

Then E. DE SELYS LONGCHAMPS (1894, *Annls Soc. ent. Belg.* 38: 163-181) described a specimen as "the first male" of *D. nanus*, but later this was proven to be conspecific with *D. fujiana* Fraser, 1936 (S. ASAHINA, 1957, *Shin-Konchu* 10[6]: 51-58). F. RIS (1916, *Supplta entomol.* 5: 1-81) described a new species *D. cuniculus* based on both sexes from "Shoji, Plateau des Fujiyama"; this species was subsequently synonymized with *D. nanus* by S. ASAHINA (1950, *Iconographia insectorum japonicum, editio secunda reformata*, Vol. 3, pp. 131-168). Ris also described and illustrated a female specimen as *D. ater*, but according to ASAHINA (1957, *loc. cit.*) this was the same as *Lanthus fujiacus*, a species described by F.C. FRASER (1936,

*Trans. R. ent. Soc. Lond.* 85: 141-156). In the same paper Fraser, in his turn, wrote "I am inclined to regard *D. cuniculus* as the real *D. ater* Selys, but as the end of the abdomen of the type male and allotype female are both missing, it is impossible to be certain". A further taxon, *Gomphus hakiensis*, described by a single female by S. MATSUMURA in K. OGUMA (1926, *Ins. matsumur.* 1[2]: 78-100, 1 pl. excl.) was first synonymized with *D. cuniculus* by K.J. VALLE (1941, *Annls ent. fenn.* 7: 141), later with *D. nanus* by ASAHINA (1950, *loc. cit.*).

Since 1936, the status of *D. ater* has been discussed only by S. ASAHINA (1957, *Shin-Konchu* 10[6]: 51-58) in a Japanese article without English summary, published in a journal aimed for amateur entomologists. An English translation of his relevant text is given here: "*Davidius nanus* (♂), described by Selys (1894), is correctly *D. fujiana*. On the contrary, I suspected the male and female [specimens] described as *D. ater* (1878) to be just *nanus*, and I was able to confirm that my suspicion was true by checking the collection of British Museum and Selys' collection of Bruxelles, the type of Hagen in Harvard, and correspondence with Lieftinck." Since afterwards the name *D. ater* did not appear in any other articles or books on the Japanese odonates, it is no wonder that the [informally presented] synonymy of *D. ater* with *D. nanus* by ASAHINA (1957) has remained unnoticed by the western cataloguers. S. TSUDA (2000, *A distributional list of world Odonata 2000*) did not list *D. ater*, but unfortunately it is missing also from his list of the synonymic names. Consequently the list of synonymies is as follows:

*Davidius nanus* (Selys, 1869)

Syn. *Davidius ater* Hagen in Selys, 1878

Syn. *Davidius cuniculus* Ris, 1916

Syn. *Gomphus hakiensis* Matsumura in Oguma, 1926

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