

On the spelling of *Eupelecotheca celer* Townsend, 1919 (Tachinidae, Exoristinae)

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Abstract. This note advises on the correct spelling of the species-group name *celer* Townsend, 1919 according to the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*.

The species-group name *Eupelecotheca celer* Townsend (1919: 169) was made available without a note about the etymology, and it was subsequently combined with *Neomintho* Brauer & Bergenstamm, 1891 as *Neomintho celeris* by Wood (1987). The change in ending is necessary if *celer* is interpreted as an adjective, as species-group names must agree in gender with the genus they are at any time combined with, according to Articles 31 and 34 of the *Code* (ICZN 1999). *Celer* is an adjective meaning ‘quick’ or ‘rapid’. However, it is also a noun, *Celeres*. The plural form means ‘knights’ or ‘bodyguard of the King’ and the singular form *celer* refers to the chief of the *Celeres*, and was also used as a cognomen in antiquity (Lewis & Short 1879). Under Article 31.2.2 of the *Code*, the species-group name *celer* must be treated as a noun, as there is no indication by Townsend of which meaning he intended for the name; it may be regarded as either, and the evidence of usage is not decisive either way.

Neomintho Brauer & Bergenstamm, 1891 is of feminine gender according to Article 30.2.3 of the *Code*, as it does not match a Greek or Latin word in spelling, as there is no etymological note attached, and as it is combined with a species-group name formed from the feminine adjective *macilenta* meaning ‘lean’, ‘thin’, or ‘meagre’. *Eupelecotheca* Townsend, 1919 is also feminine in gender. Townsend’s (1919) original use of the masculine gender ending was incorrect according to the current *Code* if it is viewed as an adjective, but correct if *celer* is viewed as a noun, which may in itself indicate a decisive usage of *celer* as a noun in the original text – had he intended it to be read as an adjective, he might have written *celeris*.

The change by Wood (1987) to *celeris* was therefore unjustified, and the name should be *Neomintho celer* (Townsend, 1919). The combination of *celer* with *Eupelecotheca* was revived in O’Hara (2026) with no change to the original gender ending. This is the correct combination.

The original combination *Eupelecotheca celer* has been used consistently by many authors (e.g., Reinhard 1953: 244; Arnaud 1963: 43; Sabrosky & Arnaud 1965: 1051; and Evenhuis *et al.* 2015: 118). *Eupelecotheca celer* is the type species of *Eupelecotheca*, by original designation. Full synonymies and more information can be found in Sabrosky & Arnaud (1965), O'Hara & Wood (2004), O'Hara *et al.* (2020), and O'Hara (2026).

The correct spelling of the name in its original combination is *Eupelecotheca celer* Townsend, 1919.

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