

The need for priority revision of certain Auchenorrhyncha genera : economic and conservation issues.

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Almost 20 years ago Viraktamath (1983) discussed genera of Cicadellidae that he considered in need of urgent taxonomic revision. His starting point was for those genera that were of some economic importance. His list is reviewed and progress in the intervening years is evaluated and discussed. To this list of leafhopper genera there may also be added genera in the Fulgoromorpha such as Malenia (Derbidae), Myndus (Cixiidae), Ollarius (Cixiidae), Delphacodes (Delphacidae) and in the Cicadoidea, genera such as Cicadetta.

Some of these genera have little economic impact but may fall into a category of "old-fashioned, and biogeographically useless" genera. The continued use of such genera without revision and evaluation may hide any biogeographical patterns and relationships. Some examples will be given and discussed. It can also be argued that the conservation status of some groups might be enhanced by splitting - perhaps especially when dealing with island forms. We may no longer be dealing with endemic species but endemic genera and species, with a potentially greater conservation priority.

Unfortunately the resolution of these difficult and frequently speciose genera is not easy. While it may be relatively easy to remove some species to new genera we may be frequently left with a number of ill-defined species in the original genus. Unless all species in the genus are studied we may create confusion when providing genera for half the species and the remainder are not assigned.