



**ENTOMOLOGICAL
SOCIETY OF AMERICA**
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**Entomological Society of America
Proposal Form for New Common Name or
Change of ESA-Approved Common Name**

Complete this form and e-mail to pubs@entsoc.org.

Submissions will not be considered unless this form is filled out completely.

The proposer is expected to be familiar with the rules, recommendations, and procedures outlined in the “Use and Submission of Common Names” on the ESA website at <https://www.entsoc.org/pubs/use-and-submission-common-names>.

1. Proposed new common name: This proposal is to remove the common name, Tahitian coconut weevil

2. Previously approved common name (if any):

No previous common name for Tahitian coconut weevil has been approved of to our knowledge.

3. Scientific name (genus, species, author):

Genus & species: *Diocalandra taitensis*

Author: Guérin-Méneville

Supporting Information

4. Please provide a clear and convincing explanation for why a common name is needed, possibly including but not limited to the taxon’s economic, ecological, or medical importance, striking appearance, abundance, or conservation status:

The Better Common Names Project Task Force has been tasked by the Entomological Society of America with reviewing the ESA Common Names of Insects Database for names that no longer meet ESA’s policies for acceptable insect common names, which contains names referencing ethnic or racial groups and names that might cause xenophobia.

In determining how to address existing common names that fail to meet these guidelines, the task force

has recommended that such common names with minimal documented usage be removed from the ESA Common Names List without replacement. With minimal usage in the years on the common names of insects list, this species does not appear to be of concern as required: "the list of common names is intended to include those insects and other invertebrates commonly of concern or interest to entomologists." It may be of concern in some localities outside the USA, but "Included species, in most cases, will inhabit the United States, Canada, or their possessions and territories. In special cases, other species may be added." The "special case" is unclear for this species.

Removal of common names from the list is not without precedent. Historically, names have been removed on occasion from the ESA Common Names List for a variety of reasons, including confusion or overlap with other similar species, taxonomic updates, consolidation, and more

This request is to remove the common name Tahitian coconut weevil, *Diocalandra taitensis*, from the ESA Common Name Database. Tahitian typically refers to the indigenous people of Tahiti and other islands in the French Polynesia. While *D. taitensis* was originally described from Tahiti, the weevil has expanded its range to several islands in the Pacific (Zimmerman 1968) and beyond the French Polynesian islands. The weevil has also been detected in Madagascar and Hawaii (CABI 2005, USDA 1939).

Aside from "coconut weevil" which describes the host and type of beetle, the addition of "Tahitian" does not assist in describing *D. taitensis*. In addition, in a few instances, the common name Red-brown weevil is used instead of Tahitian coconut weevil on Inaturalist Luxemburg and on Cooks Islands Biodiversity & Natural Heritage website.

5. Stage or characteristic to which the proposed common name refers.

(If the description involves a physical feature, it is strongly encouraged that an image of the organism be provided with this submission.)

This refers to all stages of life.

6. Distribution (include references):

Hawaii, Madagascar, Australia and several Pacific Islands:

CAB International. (2005). *Diocalandra taitense*. [Distribution map]. *Distribution Maps of Plant Pests*.
<https://doi.org/10.1079/dmpp/20056600248>

USDA. (1939). *List of Intercepted Plant Pests, 1938* (pp. 1–64).
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-A-f3215147fa30c7ee36ca830866ca12f4/pdf/GOVPUB-A-f3215147fa30c7ee36ca830866ca12f4.pdf>

Zimmerman, E. C. (1968). Rhynchophorinae of Southeastern Polynesia (Coleoptera : Curculionidae). *Pacific Insects*, 10(1), 47–77. [https://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/pi/pdf/10\(1\)-47.pdf](https://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/pi/pdf/10(1)-47.pdf)

7. Principal hosts (include references):

Coconut crops

8. Please provide multiple references indicating clearly that the proposed name is already established and ideally widespread in use. If the name has been newly coined for purposes of this application, please state so:

The following information below highlights how the common name, Tahitian coconut weevil, is not commonly used. Using Google Scholar, the last time the common name “Tahitian coconut weevil” was used was for a book published in 2012, Biogeography and Ecology of New Guinea. Not many scientific articles have been published on *Diocalandra taitensis*.

We used Google to search for variations of the common name and scientific name:

- Tahitian coconut weevil + *Diocalandra taitensis* (86 hits)
- Tahiti coconut weevil (7 hits) (<https://gd.eppo.int/taxon/DIOCTA>)
- Tahitian coconut weevil (3 hits)
- Lesser coconut weevil (1 hit)
- For the scientific name only, Google Scholar showed 27 hits. Web of Science showed 1 hit.

9. Please identify any common names in use, including those used by indigenous peoples in the insect's area of origin, that have been applied to this taxon, other than the one herein proposed, with references. Please briefly describe the methods used to find alternative names and, if necessary, justify why each alternate name is inadequate:

Not available. This proposal is to remove the common name.

10. Please identify any other organisms to which your proposed common name could apply, giving careful consideration to closely related taxa. Please justify why the proposed common name is (i) unsuitable for each of those taxa and/or (ii) better suited for the proposed taxon:

This proposal is to remove the common name. A common name that describes this species based on its behavior, physical characteristics, host association, life cycle etc., should be proposed in the future.

11. Please document your efforts to consult with entomologists (including taxonomic specialists), colleagues, or other professionals who work with the taxon as to the suitability and need for the proposed common name. Please note that this is an important element of your proposal; proposals that do not document these steps are less likely to be successful.

Entomologists and experts of *Diocalandra taitensis* were not consulted because the goal was to remove the common name.

Reference:

CAB International. (2005). *Diocalandra taitense* . [Distribution map].. *Distribution Maps of Plant Pests*.
<https://doi.org/10.1079/dmpp/20056600248>

Cook Islands Biodiversity & Natural Heritage. (2007). *Cook Islands Biodiversity : Diocalandra taitensis - Red-brown Weevil*. Bishopmuseum.org. <http://cookislands.bishopmuseum.org/species.asp?id=7284>

iNaturalist. (2016, October). *Red-brown Weevil (Diocalandra taitensis)*. iNaturalist Luxembourg.
<https://inaturalist.lu/taxa/1354971-Diocalandra-taitensis#map-tab>

USDA. (1939). *List of Intercepted Plant Pests, 1938* (pp. 1–64).
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-A-f3215147fa30c7ee36ca830866ca12f4/pdf/GOVPUB-A-f3215147fa30c7ee36ca830866ca12f4.pdf>

Zimmerman, E. C. (1968). Rhynchophorinae of Southeastern Polynesia (Coleoptera : Curculionidae). *Pacific Insects*, 10(1), 47–77. [https://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/pi/pdf/10\(1\)-47.pdf](https://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/pi/pdf/10(1)-47.pdf)

Proposed by: Better Common Names Project Task Force

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