



## ICTV Newsletter #10 (2012)

The “ICTV Newsletter” is designed to inform all interested in the work of the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV) about recent developments and involve them more directly in taxonomic deliberations. It is produced annually by a member of the ICTV Executive Committee (EC). The Newsletter is sent to all those who have joined the ICTV discussion site at [ICTVonline.org](http://ICTVonline.org). Readers are responsible for keeping up-to-date their personal and contact information, including new email addresses. If you are a National Representative, make sure all the appropriate information is included on the web site, and send a note to the ICTV Secretary Mike Adams (see below). To register, navigate to <http://talk.ictvonline.org/> and click on “Join” in the upper right-hand corner of the page, near the “Search” box. Registration is automatic. Once registered, sign in using the name and password you provided. You can update your contact information by clicking on “Edit Profile” in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Please distribute this Newsletter freely. Comments and suggestions regarding the content of the Newsletter are welcome.

### Executive Committee activities:

The EC usually meets once a year. The 44<sup>th</sup> meeting of the EC (EC44) was held July 23-25 2012 in Leuven, Belgium and was hosted by Rob Lavigne. This was the first meeting of the new EC since the elections held at the ICTV plenary meeting in Sapporo, September 2011 and included several new members. All but three of the [EC members](#) attended the 2½ days meeting. The agenda included processing of taxonomic proposals; discussion of taxonomy-related issues; EC management; continuing development of the ICTV website; and the dissemination and update of the ICTV 9<sup>th</sup> Report (see below). A proposal to revise the ICTV Statutes and the International Code of Virus Classification and Nomenclature code was extensively debated. It includes revision of the virus species definition (Rule 3.21). To follow and contribute to the discussion on any of the proposals under consideration, please go to <http://talk.ictvonline.org/files/proposals/default.aspx>. You will need to be logged in to the website to access this link.

In an effort to serve better the needs of the community, the EC has decided to test changes to the processing of taxonomic proposals by introducing a fast-track approval of good quality proposals. In the past few years, proposals for new genera or higher level taxa have always been reviewed at a minimum of two EC meetings, which has usually meant that they take a minimum of about 18 months from submission to final ratification by the ICTV membership. Under the new arrangement, the EC may decide to have the second review conducted by email about 3 months after the EC meeting. In this way, proposals could be adopted within about 6 months. Good quality proposals for new species in existing genera are already fast-tracked but without the second review by EC members. These changes will not

only speed up the process but will enable the EC to process a larger volume of proposals and to dedicate more time to discussing the most challenging issues of virus taxonomy.

The 45th EC meeting will be held July 14-17, 2013 in Edinburgh, Scotland, hosted by Peter Simmonds and Andrew J. Davison.

## **Recent progress with taxonomic proposals:**

### **Ratification of previous proposals**

All proposals approved by the EC need to be ratified by the entire voting membership of ICTV. This includes National Representatives, members of the subcommittees (mostly Study Group chairs) and Life Members. A large number of taxonomic proposals were ratified in an e-vote in February 2012. An article reporting the approved taxonomic changes has been published in the Virology Division News section of Archives of Virology [[M. J. Adams and E. B. Carstens \(2012\). Ratification vote on taxonomic proposals to the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses \(2012\). Arch. Virol. 157\(7\): 1411-1422](#)]. These are the first changes to the taxonomy that is presented in the ICTV 9<sup>th</sup> Report (see below).

### **Taxonomic proposals under consideration**

Taxonomic proposals approved at the EC44 meeting and through subsequent fast-track approval are expected to be sent to the ICTV membership via e-mail for ratification later this year or very early in 2013. The proposals include the creation of a new order of dsDNA bacteriophage, *Ligamenvirales*, and important changes to the families *Myoviridae*, *Siphoviridae*, *Picornaviridae*, *Rhabdoviridae*, *Tombusviridae* and *Geminiviridae* in particular. The detailed proposals can be examined at <http://talk.ictvonline.org/files/proposals/default.aspx>. The web site also hosts proposals that have been recently submitted or revised, and which will be discussed (or re-considered) at EC45.

## **ICTV publications:**

### **ICTV Ninth Report and its updates**

The ICTV Ninth Report (ISBN-13: 978-0123846846) is now available for purchase. Please request that your libraries purchase a copy. It is also available as an e-book and an online version is available to institutional subscribers. The EC is exploring different options for making updates to the Report on a regular and timely basis to improve the awareness of the community about developments in virus taxonomy. IF you have suggestions on how you would prefer to access updates, let us know. Meanwhile, a summary of the latest ICTV-authorized taxonomy can always be found at <http://www.ictvonline.org/> where it can be consulted online or downloaded as a spreadsheet (the Master Species List).

### **Virology Division News (VDN)**

The VDN section of Archives of Virology is an important vehicle to communicate ICTV news to the virology community and beyond. Please send reports and articles that deal with the development of virus taxonomy to [Jens Kuhn](#), Editor of VDN. It is important to reflect properly the status of taxa in these

articles, by indicating clearly whether they are (i) officially recognized by the ICTV, (ii) the subject of taxonomic proposals currently being considered by the ICTV, or (iii) informal suggestions for discussion

## **ICTVdB**

The ICTV database (ICTVdb; not to be confused with the ICTV's taxonomy database, described below) had been taken off-line due to technical, content and financial issues. There is no immediate prospect of further development but the EC is considering ways in which the isolate and species information that it contains could be linked in the future to an online ICTV Report.

## **Study Group Chairs**

Study Groups (SGs) are responsible for keeping up-to-date with the emergence of new viruses and proposing new species or higher taxa in their families by submitting taxonomic proposals to the appropriate Subcommittee Chairs. The current list of SGs along with Chairs can be accessed as an alphabetical list (<http://ictvonline.org/studygroups.asp>). Please send any changes to your contact information (e.g. mail address) to your SG Chair and to [Mike Adams](#).

## **Funding**

ICTV is very grateful to the following organizations for their recent support: the Virology Division of [the International Union of Microbiological Societies](#), [the Society of General Microbiology](#), [the American Society of Virology](#).

## **Important links:**

### **Main Web site for ICTV**

<http://ictvonline.org/index.asp>

### **ICTV virus taxonomy database: current classification and history of each taxon since 2005**

<http://ictvonline.org/virusTaxonomy.asp>

### **Templates for taxonomic proposals**

<http://talk.ictvonline.org/media/g/templates/default.aspx>

## **Problems, comments and questions**

As always, comments and suggestions are welcome. To ensure efficient distribution of this and other information, we ask you to verify your personal information online and make necessary updates. If you are a National Representative, make sure all the appropriate information is included on the web site, and send a note to the ICTV Secretary, [Mike Adams](#).

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Vice-President

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