PROPOSAL TO DECLARE RHODOPSEUDOMONAS
SPHEROIDES AS NOMEN CONSERVANDUM

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The species Rhodopseudomonas spheroides was proposed by van Niel (1944). It comprised the former species Rhodococcus capsulatus Molisch (1907) and Rhodococcus minor Molisch (1907), including their later synonyms (cf. Index Bergeyana 1966). During his rearrangement of the classification of the photosynthetic non-sulfur bacteria, van Niel reserved the specific epithet capsulatus for Rhodopseudomonas capsulata, formerly Rhodonostoc capsulatum Molisch (1907). Consequently, since the species Rhodococcus capsulatus and Rhodococcus minor were united to form another Rhodopseudomonas species, the specific epithet minor would have been correct. By proposing spheroides, a much more appropriate term, unfortunately rule 24b, International Code of Nomenclature of Bacteria (1966) was violated. Notwithstanding its illegitimate nomenclatural status Rhodopseudomonas spheroides became one of the best known and most often experimentally employed photosynthetic bacteria. The specific epithet was generally adopted and is in use by microbiologists and biochemists throughout the world. Since rejection would lead to great confusion we request Rhodopseudomonas spheroides van Niel 1944, 95, be conserved as a nomen specificum conservandum. A similar proposal concerning the genus Rhodopseudomonas as such has been submitted earlier (Pfennig and Trüper 1969). Conservation would legitimize use of this species name in the future.

LITERATURE CITED

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