

Netrium interruptulum, a new status and new name for *Netrium interruptum* forma *minus* Borge

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Abstract

Netrium interruptulum Coesel is proposed as a new species name for *Netrium interruptum* forma *minus* Borge 1909. From the European lowlands, the taxon in question was not recorded before.

Keywords: desmid, *Netrium*, nomenclature.

Introduction

In September 2025, the Flemish citizen scientist André Vanhoof discovered a remarkably small form of *Netrium interruptum* (Ralfs) Lütkemüller (figs 1–2). The find in question (GPS 51.21355, 5.16162) was done in a wet cart track making part of the Flemish nature reserve 'Buitengoor' situated near the border with the Netherlands. Considering the well-known Rabenhorst flora by Krieger (1933), the cells encountered could be identified as *Netrium interruptum* var. *minus* (Borge) Willi Krieger, a taxon up to then not known from the European lowlands area.



Figure 1. A cell of *Netrium interruptulum* Coesel as encountered in nature reserve 'Buitengoor'. Photo © André Vanhoof.

Taxonomy

The taxon under discussion was originally described by Borge (1909: 2, fig. 1) from Florida (USA) as *Penium interruptum* forma *minus* ("minor") (our fig. 3). Krieger



Figure 2. Another cell of *Netrium interruptulum* Coesel as encountered in nature reserve 'Buitengoor'. Photo © André Vanhoof.

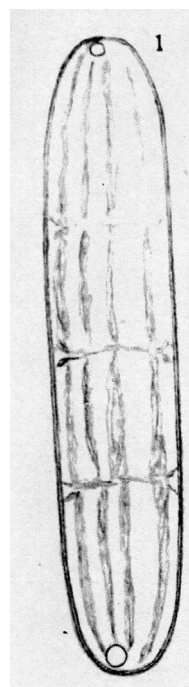


Figure 3. *Netrium interruptulum* Coesel copied from Borge 1909, fig. 1 [as *Penium interruptum* forma *minus* ("minor")].

(1933: 223, pl. 8: 10) nomenclaturally recombined it to *Netrium interruptum* var. *minus* ("minor"). As an earlier published synonym he mentions the smaller form *Penium digitus* b. *interruptum* α described by Klebs (1879: 25, pl. 3: 3a, b). Although Klebs described his taxon from Eastern Germany, the illustration referred to — more detailed than that in Borge — makes likely that we have to do with the same taxon indeed (our fig. 4). As its name indicates, Krieger's newly distinguished variety of *Netrium interruptum* differs from the nominate variety by distinctly smaller cell dimensions [length 82–109 μm versus (150) 180–300 (400) μm in the nominate variety]. Next to that, however, there is a remarkable difference in the morphology of the cell ends: abruptly conically attenuating in var. *interruptum*, rather gradually narrowing to a broadly rounding apex in var. *minus*. In particular that latter feature renders cells of var. *minus* quite an own appearance and in my opinion justifies distinction on species level:

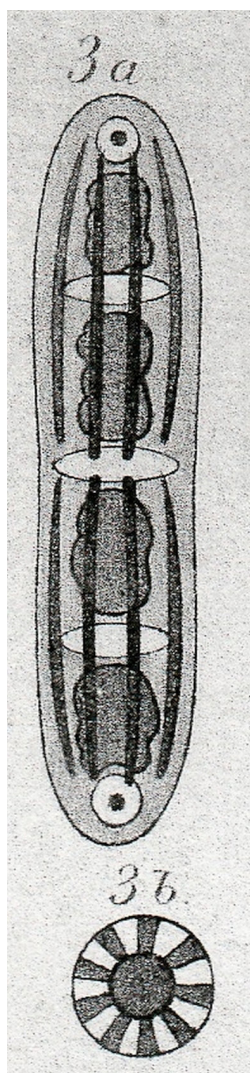


Figure 4. *Netrium interruptulum* Coesel copied from Klebs 1879, pl. 3: 3 (as *Penium digitus* b. *interruptum* α).

Netrium interruptulum Coesel stat. et nom. nov.

Homotypic synonym: *Penium interruptum* forma *minus* "minor" Borge 1909: 2, fig. 1.

The above newly named taxon could also be accommodated the genus *Planotaenium*, see Palamar-Mordvintseva & Petlovany 2009: 103, but in view of better fitting in the current edition of the flora 'Desmids of the Lowlands' (Coesel & Meesters, 2023), as yet I prefer to stick to the genus *Netrium*.

Distribution

According to Guiry (2024), *Netrium interruptulum* (as *Netrium interruptum* var. *minus*) is known from both North and South America, Asia and Europe. Within Europe it has been reported from Great Britain, Austria, the Czech Republic, Serbia, France and Spain. Obviously it has a wide geographical distribution. Yet, the number of records is very limited, so presumably it is a rather rare taxon which may explain why in the European lowlands it has not been encountered before.

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