



2020 WSSA Standing Committee Report

Committee Name and Code: P23 Standardized Plant Names

Committee Chair: Karla Gage

Committee Members: Lauren Lazaro, Mark Czarnota, Joan Campbell, Shawn Askew, Camp Hand, Theresa Piskackova, Eugene Law, Carroll Moseley (ex-officio), Tom Mueller (ex-officio)

Board of Directors Liaison: Rob Richardson

Committee members rotating off and recommended replacements: Lauren Lazaro, Mark Czarnota, and Joan Campbell were scheduled to rotate off the committee in 2022 but have agreed to serve another term. Chair will transfer to Theresa Piskackova, and Karla Gage will remain as a committee member. Two more committee members will be recruited to assist in the database review; these members will be from the Western region to round out committee representation.

Summary of past year's activities: The committee has continued to hold regular monthly meetings. Over the past year, the committee has developed guidelines for common name review, and these guidelines have been approved by the WSSA Board. The committee has moved forward with scheduling the timeline to complete common name review and is now working through the database. The committee is working with Chris Taliga (USDA) for further guidance. The committee has developed an outline of a review paper for publication in the scientific literature to explain this process and the importance and relevance of common names in weed science.

- **Committee goals**

Provide recommendations for an updated, revised list of WSSA-sanctioned common names to the WSSA Board for review. The WSSA P22b subcommittee will work in cooperation with USDA PLANTS database (<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/>) to either suggest changes to WSSA names to match USDA names, or provide a WSSA-

sanctioned common name alternatives or additions to the USDA PLANTS names on the USDA website and database list.

The target deadline for completion of the main objective is estimated to be June. At the time of review completion, the common names that diverge between USDA Plants and WSSA will need to be evaluated by our committee, changed if warranted, and reported as a final list to USDA. If the WSSA and USDA names still diverge after committee review, then USDA may add a “WSSA-approved” name to their website listing for these species. However, if the species is of conservation concern, USDA may not provide a WSSA-approved name. All common names will remain in the PLANTS database.

• Committee accomplishments

Guidelines for review have been established and are included in this section, below. The committee will continue to meet monthly throughout the review period to address questions and ensure the greatest degree of standardization between reviewers as possible. Once the common name review is complete, the committee will move on to the review of scientific names.

On September 15, 2021, the P23 committee had consensus of the following

1. The committee will recommence evaluation of the entire WSSA composite list of weeds based on the reduced list of guidelines approved by the board.
2. The guidelines (taken from latest edition of “Applying New Rules” in “Preparing Guidelines” folder):
 1. Incorrect or inappropriate names will be changed (i.e. spring whitlowgrass-> spring whitlow)
 2. Punctuation will be removed with the following conditions
 1. Hyphens will be removed and the word will become compound or separate in accordance with similar words in USDA database
 2. Possessive ” ‘s “ will drop entirely in case of proper nouns: following the example of Palmer amaranth (not Palmer’s amaranth, Nuttall x rather than Nuttall’s x)
 3. The apostrophe will drop and the “s” remain in cases of common nouns following the example of shepherds purse
- c. Compound words will be evaluated and may be separated based on the following conditions
 1. Words will not be separated when the compound word refers to a distinct group of plants
 1. E.g. sowthistle, goldenrod, ragweed, honeysuckle, burdock, chickweed, milkweed, morningglory, etc.
 2. Usually this is in agreement with USDA, but sometimes... see c.iii.
 - ii. Words will not be separated when the compound word is a commonly used combination of a descriptor and plant part
 1. E.g. broadleaf, cutleaf, dayflower, ect.
 2. Refer to the USDA database for other examples of the word in question to determine commonality
 - iii. Words will not be separated when the USDA conflict contains a hyphen
 1. E.g. USDA uses swallow-wort, star-thistle, but WSSA uses swallowwort, starthistle. Words of this type should stay together as WSSA already has them
 2. In some cases, the opposite may be true. WSSA name may contain two words and the USDA has a hyphen. In this instance, the WSSA name may stay separate.
- d. Complete name departures from the USDA list will be conserved to WSSA list (Palmer amaranth, yellow indigo) unless
 - i. The WSSA name is inappropriate, culturally insensitive, etc. (Eastern Jew mallow) See rule a.

- ii. The WSSA name is not specific to specific epithet, for instance when the WSSA common name refers to a group of plants or could apply to several species (many species are a type of “yellow rocket”, USDA differentiates between them while WSSA refers only to *Barbarea vulgaris* as ‘yellow rocket’). In these cases, an adjective may be added
 - iii. The name is not a very common weed in WSSA communication and literature and there is a very good justification for the plant to be referred to by USDA name instead
- e. Names that differ from USDA only in capitalization or word endings will be conserved to USDA unless
 - i. Weed is common in WSSA communication and literature (i.e. johnsongrass, Canada thistle)
- 3. All changes to names within the composite list of weeds will be highlighted and sent to the board for approval. The list must be approved before sent to USDA
- 4. All names that differ from the listed USDA common name will be compiled for USDA to review. These names may be added to USDA plant profiles as alternative names (definitely) and notated on the site as WSSA official name (if the species is not in conflict with other USDA restoration measures, ESA, etc.).

○ Impact of committee activities/accomplishments on membership, publications, policy, education, other, etc.

There are no impacts to report yet.

- **WSSA funds requested if any?**

No funds are requested.

- **Current state of the committee’s projects or activities?**

Activities will be ongoing for the next several months as we review common names.

- **Any new information posted on the WSSA website?**

There is no new information to post yet, but any suggested revisions to the WSSA weeds list will be presented to the Board. If approved, we will request that a revised list is posted on the website.

Summary of plans for next year (changes in goals, key initiatives, plan of action, etc.):

As the committee reviews common names, cases of divergent scientific names are being noted. Following the review of common names, the committee will move forward with a review of scientific names.

Recommendations for Board or Membership action (funds or other requests):

There are no recommendations for Board action at this time, but the committee welcomes questions or feedback.