

# Naming Conventions for Conditional and Provisional Taxa

This page describes the conventions used for constructing conditional and provisional names used in BioData.

BenchTaxonName	Applicable Taxonomic Groups	
sp. nr.	invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Means "species near"</li> <li>2) Refers to a potentially undescribed species nearest to the species following the designation</li> <li>3) Example: <i>Hydropsyche</i> sp. nr. <i>simulans</i></li> </ol>
cf.	algae, fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Means "confer"</li> <li>2) Refers to a species that closely matches the species following the designation but differs morphologically in some minor ways or the description in the literature is too vague or incomplete to be certain</li> <li>3) Example: <i>Hydropsyche</i> cf. <i>simulans</i></li> </ol>
/ "slash"	fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Used to denote two or more taxa that are unresolvable or where only two taxa are known in a monophyletic group</li> <li>2) Placed between the taxa in question</li> <li>3) Species or Taxa names are ordered alphabetically</li> <li>4) Example: <i>Hydropsyche rossi/simulans</i>, <i>Centroptilum/Procloeon</i></li> </ol>
sp. 1 or sp. A genus A	fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Refers to provisional taxa reported in the literature where their specific identity remains unknown; also known as "operational taxonomic units" or "OTUs"</li> <li>2) Provisional designation is reported exactly as it appears in the literature</li> <li>3) A BenchTaxonNameReferenceCode is required to support this type of name</li> <li>4) Example: <i>Oecetis</i> sp. A</li> </ol>
BenchTaxonName_Analyst	algae	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Used for algal taxa that have not been described formally, with the format "BenchTaxonName TaxonAnalystInitials"</li> <li>2) Example: <i>Hippodonta</i> sp. 19_SAS</li> </ol>
sp. 1 ?	algae	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Genus names followed by "sp. 1 ?", "sp. 2 ?", "sp. 3 ?", etc. refer to unique species within the sample, but the species name (epithet) has not been determined.</li> <li>2) These designations are used for taxa that are rare in a sample and may not be identified with confidence. These names are to be used to determine the number of unique taxa within a sample. That is, the names distinguish taxa that are different within a sample, but not across samples. For example, Sample #1 contains <i>Navicula</i> sp. 1 ?, <i>Navicula</i> sp. 2 ? and <i>Navicula</i> sp. 3 ?, which are 3 undistinguished species within the sample. If Sample #2 also contains <i>Navicula</i> sp. 1 ?, this taxon may (or may not) be the same as in Sample #1.</li> <li>3) NOTE that within a sample with only one unknown species in "Genus", Genus sp. is equivalent to Genus sp. 1 ?</li> </ol>
group	fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Denotes a group of more than two closely related species that cannot be separated or organisms that can be reliably placed in a species group where determination to species is unsupported</li> <li>2) If only two species in the group, then use "/" or slash designation</li> <li>3) Is formally recognized in the literature</li> <li>4) A BenchTaxonNameReferenceCode is highly desirable, but not required to support this type of name</li> <li>5) Example: <i>Hydropsyche scalaris</i> group</li> </ol>
complex	algae, fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Denotes a species for which there may be considerable variation suggesting two or more cryptic species</li> <li>2) Is formally recognized in the literature</li> <li>3) A BenchTaxonNameReferenceCode is highly desirable, but not required to support this type of name</li> <li>4) Example: <i>Oecetis inconspicua</i> complex</li> </ol>
n. sp.	fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Means "new species"</li> <li>2) Represents a species new to science that has been verified by a recognized authority or one that appears in the literature as such</li> <li>3) A BenchTaxonNameReferenceCode is required to support this type of name</li> <li>4) Example: <i>Hydroptila</i> n. sp.</li> </ol>
Other conditional or provisional designations	fish, invert ebrates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Reported exactly as they appear in the reference from which they were obtained</li> <li>2) A BenchTaxonNameReferenceCode is required to support this type of name</li> <li>3) Example: <i>Stilocladius?</i> or Thienemannimyia group sp.</li> </ol>