

## **Tardigrade taxonomy: an updated check list of the taxa and a list of characters for their identification**

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### **Abstract**

Since the most recent monograph on Tardigrada by Ramazzotti & Maucci (1983), many changes have been introduced in the systematics of this phylum which has gone through different revisions and has been expanded by several new taxa. Moreover, the number of species is considerably increased (almost doubled to more than 960 species) and new families and genera have been created, while many taxa have been amended. The difficulty in finding a complete, updated list of taxa and the problems with putting together all the newly proposed taxonomic criteria, led us to compile an updated list of tardigrade taxa. This list is supplemented by a series of bibliographic references inherent in the synonymies and/or the amended diagnosis of the taxa occurred after 1983, and a list of the main characters used in the diagnosis of the species. These lists are aimed at helping not only the specialists studying this group, but also researchers interested in biodiversity and those who have to refer to this animal group.

**Key words:** Tardigrada, systematics, check list, taxonomic criteria