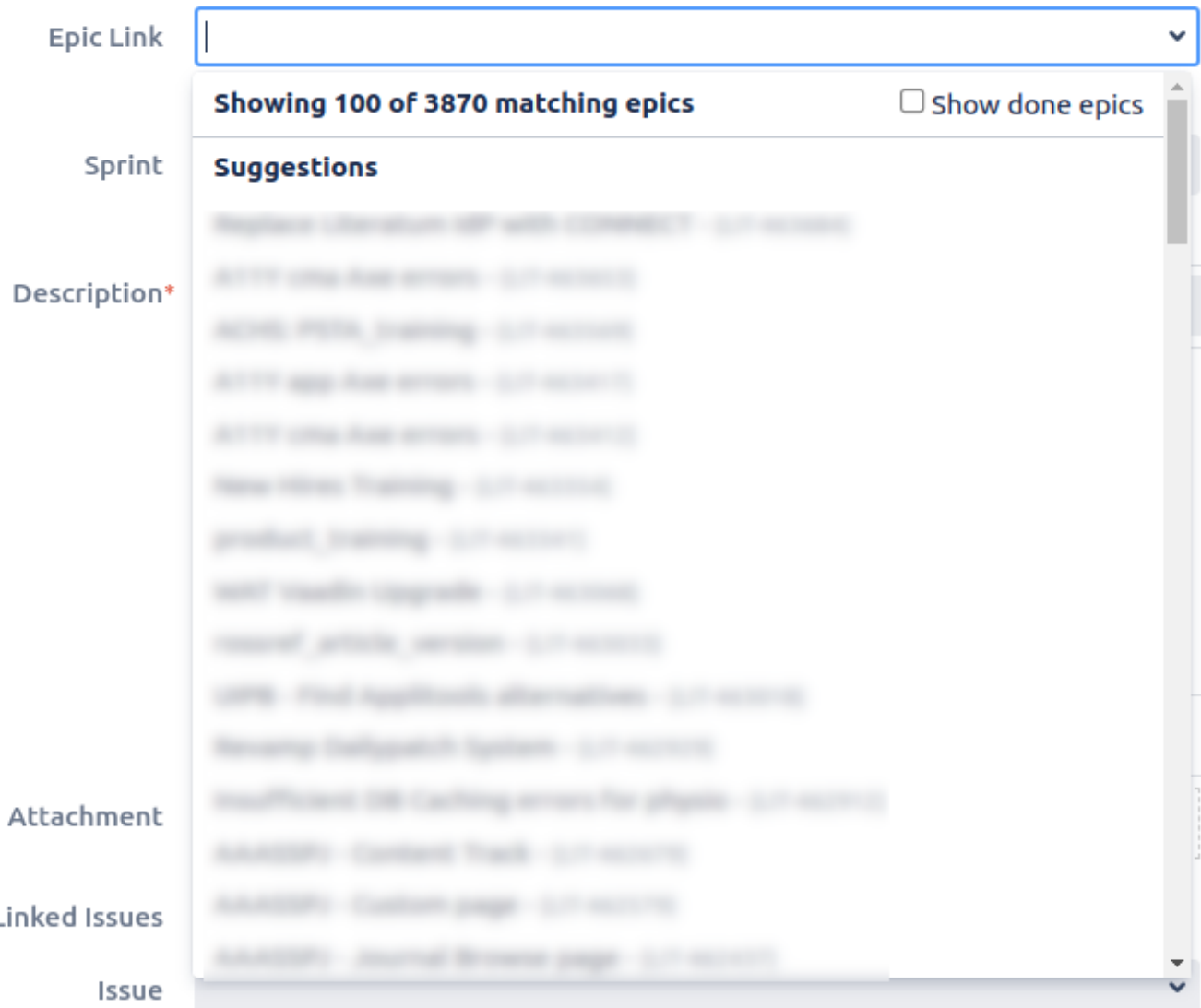


Avoiding Eternal Epics - keeping the Epic Status field updated

This bug workaround will primary benefit larger Jira instances with many Epics.

When creating bugs or feature requests, there is an **Epic Link** field letting you connect your new issue to an existing Epic.

Have you noticed that is showing rather a lot of Epics in the **Epic Link** drop-down? In fact, that it is showing Epics that are resolved, despite the Show done epics checkbox being unchecked?



This is because the **Epic Status** field on those Epics is not in sync with reality. This happens when Epics are resolved through regular Jira issue screen, and not via a Board.

Background

Jira renders closed/resolved issues as ~~striked-out~~ links. Closed issues also don't appear in the default "Open Issues" filter or "Created vs Resolved" portlet.

But Jira workflows are arbitrary:

- A Bug may transition from Open In Progress Resolved Closed.
- A Task may go from Todo In Progress Done.
- A HR workflow might be Prospect Interviewing Hired.

How does Jira know that some statuses ("Closed", "Done", "Hired") mean the issue is finished, and can be rendered ~~striked-out~~?

Answer: it relies on the presence or absence of the `resolution` field. To Jira, no resolution means 'open'. It's a hack, and leads to problems when workflow designers fail to set/unset `resolution` in sync with the status, but it works. See <https://confluence.atlassian.com/cloudkb/best-practices-on-using-the-resolution-field-968660796.html> for discussion.

Then in ~2006 or so along came Greenhopper, a Jira plugin that added Epics and Agile Boards to Jira. Greenhopper also needed a way to identify done Epics, so they could be removed from the Backlog 'Epics' filter, and removed from the 'Epic Link' filter shown above.

For some reason, rather than rely on `resolution` as a marker, Greenhopper added a new hidden custom field, `Epic Status`, with hardcoded values `To Do`, `In Progress` and `Done`. This custom field needs to be kept in sync with the `Status` field on Epics.

Atlassian simply never implemented a way of syncing `Epic Status` with `Status`. They put a [page in the docs](#) saying how to modify the Epic workflow to achieve it, but nothing more. And thus Jira in the world has `Epic Link` fields showing Epics that shouldn't be showing, as in the screenshot above.

(Aside: `Epic Status` was a bad idea anyway, and Atlassian later implemented 'status categories' which achieve the same thing. There is a never-to-be-fixed [bug](#) suggesting `Epic Status` be removed in favour of status categories)

Workaround

There are two parts to our fix:

1) Fix the existing problem

In Jira, if you run the JQL search:

```
issuetype=Epic and resolution is not empty and "Epic Status" is empty
```

you should get no results (all resolved Epics should have 'Epic Status' set).

If you get results, you need to click the top-right 'Edit' button in the search results, and [bulk edit](#) them to set the `Epic Status` field to `Done`.

After this bulk edit, try to create a bug, and find the **Epic Link** field. It should now correctly show only the really-open Epics.

2) Prevent the problem from recurring

To keep `Epic Status` in sync with `Status` one can use the Groovy listener, originally posted by at <https://community.atlassian.com/t5/Jira-Software-questions/EPIC-Status-Vs-Status/qaq-p/728237>, and replicated here for posterity:

[epicstatusyncer.groovy](#)

As of 24 May 2022 (Jira 8.20.x) the code works with no modifications needed except customizing the custom field ID.