

BOOK REVIEW

MARTÍN-PIERA F. & LÓPEZ-COLÓN J.I.: COLEOPTERA, SCARABAEOIDEA I. In: Ramos M.A. et al. (eds): Fauna Ibérica, vol. 14. Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 2000, 526 pp. ISBN 84-00-07997-3. Price ESP 6000.00.

This volume of the Fauna Ibérica is the first part of a three-volume treatise on the superfamily Scarabaeoidea. The main aim of this first volume is to provide a comprehensive account of the Iberian scarabaeoid fauna belonging to the following families: Lucanidae, Glaresidae, Trogidae, Ochodaeidae, Geotrupidae, Hybosoridae, Orphnidae and Scarabaeidae.

The book consists of two parts: general and systematic. The rather brief general part describes the morphology and life-history traits of both immature and adult stages, and reviews the origin, evolution, phylogeny and fossil history of Scarabaeoidea.

The systematic section, the principal part of this book, is divided into 8 chapters, each of which deals with one scarabaeoid family. Each chapter presents an overview of the systematic position, worldwide geographical distribution, morphology and natural history of adult and preimaginal stages, checklist of Iberian taxa and keys for identification of both adults and larvae (when known). Each species is briefly described; data concerning its biology and distribution are also given. It is a pity that no maps are presented.

As a part of this book, there is also an appendix of the synonyms of all the species included in the study. *Silpha scabra* L., 1767 (currently *Trox scaber*) is affirmed a *nomen protectum*, and consequently, *Silpha scabra* Scopoli, 1763 is relegated to the status of *nomen oblitum*. The name *Geotrupes puncticollis* (Malinowsky, 1811) is used instead of *Geotrupes spiniger* (Marsham, 1802) because of the primary homonymy with *Scarabaeus spiniger* Gmelin, 1789. Similarly, *Onthophagus (Paleonthophagus) nutans* (Fabricius, 1787) replaces the commonly used name *Onthophagus verticicornis* (Laicharting, 1781) because of the primary homonymy with *Scarabaeus verticicornis* Fabricius, 1775. Both last listed nomenclatural acts unfortunately lack a precise explanation. The following new synonymies are introduced: *Haplonthophagus*, *Kissonthophagus* and *Troglonthophagus*, all by Ádám, 1994, (= *Palaeonthophagus* Zunino, 1979). But no justification is offered for this nomenclatural act. The same applies to the nine names of Gistel

(1834 and 1857) which are formally synonymized. Under the genus *Cheironitis* Lansberge, 1875, the authors do not list until now rather commonly used but incorrect spelling *Chironitis*, introduced by Bedel (1892) and Reitter (1893). *Onthophagus verticicornis* var. *sericatus* Reitter, 1893 is listed as a junior objective synonym of *O. nutans* (Fabricius, 1787), but this taxon is commonly considered to be a valid species since the publication of Balthasar's monograph (1963). At the end of the volume there are seven colour plates of living beetles.

The volume is technically perfect, with both the original and redrawn figures and graphs of a very high quality. Both authors are renowned authorities on the taxonomy of this fascinating group of beetles. Their great knowledge of this group makes this volume very authoritative. The monograph is the basic source of information for both amateur and professional entomologists interested in Iberian Scarabaeoidea and an important tool for anybody studying this important group.

During the preparation of this review, we received very sad news. Fermín Martín-Piera, the first author of the book and the member of the scientific committee of the Fauna Ibérica project, died in July 2001 after a battle with cancer. He will be greatly missed.

References

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