

A NEW SPECIES OF *PARASCYTHOPUS* DESBROCHERS
FROM SYRIA
(Coleoptera, Curculionidae)

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INTRODUCTION

Among the material recently collected in Syria by Lucio Saltini was found the new species of *Parascythopus* Desbrochers, 1875 described in this note, which gave me the opportunity to clarify some problems arisen with the taxonomy of this genus and of the close *Phyllobius* Germar, 1824. *Parascythopus* is now comprised of 8 species primarily distributed in the eastern Mediterranean basin (Alonso-Zarazaga 2013).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Measures of the specimens were taken with a Wild M5 microscope associated with an ocular grid as follows. Total length: from base of rostrum to apex of elytra, as customary for Curculionidae. Pronotal length: from anterior margin of pronotum to tip of its base in front of scutellum. Elytral length: from the middle of an ideal line tangent to shoulders to elytral apex.

Pictures were taken with a microscope Leica Z16 APO and the associated program Leica Application Suite 3.1, and then elaborated using the program Adobe Photoshop PS4. Labels of specimens are quoted as written, a semicolon separating lines on the same label.

TAXONOMIC REMARKS

After the revision by Pesarini (1981), who included in *Parascythopus* four species, two additional ones have been described, the first of them from the Netherlands where it has been introduced (Heijerman &

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Magnano 2000), and the second from Syria, Lebanon and Israel (Borovec & Magnano 2005). In both these last papers were proposed new keys to replace that by Pesarini (1981), with the scope of correcting some errors by this author and including the newly described taxa. To *Parascythopus* were assigned by Alonso-Zarazaga (2013) the following species: *P. abeillei* (Guillebeau, 1897) from Turkey, *P. apollinis* (Miller, 1862) from Greece and Bulgaria, *P. baudii* Stierlin, 1892 from southern Italy, *P. kadleci* Borovec & Magnano, 2004 from Lebanon, Syria and Israel, *P. mirandus* Desbrochers, 1875 from Turkey and Lebanon, *P. pinicola* (Kiesenwetter, 1864) from the Balkans, and *P. exulans* Heijerman & Magnano, 2000, an alien weevil introduced into Germany and the Netherlands. This last species, however, had been previously synonymized by Bahr et al. (2012) with the Japanese *Phyllobius intrusus* Kôno, 1948, an invasive pest known as “arborvitae weevil” apparently imported since long time in North America (Kôno 1948, O’Brien & Wibmer 1982, Duncan 1996, Morimoto et al. 2006) and now spreading across north Europe (Heijerman & Magnano 2000; Ødegaard & Berggren 2010). This last species was comprised by Morimoto et al. (2006) in *Phyllobius* Germar, 1824 sensu stricto despite *P. intrusus* differs from all other known *Phyllobius* already by its smooth nasal plate and conifers as host plants instead of broadleaves, as customary for all members of the genus (Hoffmann 1950, Frieser 1981, Rheinheimer & Hassler 2000, Morimoto et al. (2006). These are exactly the features of all known members of *Parascythopus*, so that *Parascythopus intrusus* (Kôno, 1948), **new combination** is here moved from *Phyllobius* to *Parascythopus*. Of course such a combination implies some questions, being all other known members of the latter genus distributed from central to eastern Mediterranean: is *P. intrusus* really a native species in Japan or has it been introduced also in this country with some cultivated conifers? The relative polyfagy of *P. intrusus* can be an ecological factor favorising extensions of its range, and one can wonder from where this species is native. The close relationship between the new Lebanese species described below and *P. intrusus* is also noteworthy, and leads one to think to an eastern Mediterranean country, where due to harsh conditions grow several kinds of conifers, and in this case it is natural to think to a mountain species seen that *P. intrusus* appears well adapted to cool climate.

Parascythopus saltinii n. sp.

DIAGNOSIS. *A reliquis speciebus generis facile distinguitur apice rostri ferrugineo, oculis prominuli, pronoto linea longitudinali elevata carente, funiculi articulis valde elongatis.*

TYPE SERIES. Holotype ♀ labeled: "W. Syria; env. Slinfah m 1000-1300; 29/05/07; leg. L. Saltini" (Saltini collection, Modena, Italy). Paratype ♀ labeled: "W. Syria; env. Slinfah m 1000-1300; 29/05/07; leg. L. Saltini" (Colonnelli collection, Rome, Italy).

HOLOTYPE. Length 7.67 mm. Derm pitchy-brown, mandibles, tip of rostrum, antennae, posterior third of suture, apical margin of elytra and legs ferrous-red. Elytra, pronotum and head densely covered by oval bright metallic green recumbent scales some of which show a golden lustre, and of raised whitish to golden semierect rather thick setae pointing forward on epistome and a little backward on head, pronotum and elytra where they are not arranged in rows. Slightly lifted setae on antennae and legs. Rostrum 1.1 times wider than long, with almost straight sides. Epifrons about as wide as half of rostrum, with rather deep longitudinal groove delimited by two moderate longitudinal keels. U-shaped epistome bordered between the scobes by a crescent keel, and with a narrowly semicircular incision at apex. Scobes pit-shaped, entirely visible in dorsal view. Eyes moderately large and convex. Head hardly convex, depressed and foveate between eyes, in profile dorsally separated from rostrum by moderate impression. Vertex convex, bare. Antennae quite slender, scape moderately curved, barely thickening towards apex. Funicular segments 1 and 2 elongate, third about twice as long as wide, 4 to 7 slightly diminishing in length, all at least 1.3 times longer than wide. Club fusiform, slightly shorter than the three preceding segments. Prothorax 1.25 times wider than long, sides rounded, widest at middle, quite convex in lateral view, anterior margin hardly narrower than basal one and somewhat concave, disc with very faint longitudinal impression at each side of midline. Scutellum triangular. Elytra 1.96 times longer than wide and 1.6 times as wide as pronotum, sides almost straight from humeri to apical fourth, then curved and converging towards rather acute apex. Intervals almost flat, more than twice as wide as striae, suture convex on posterior third. Striae on basal third formed by subquadrate punctures, which next become fine and so approached each other to give rise to subtle lines. Femora strongly clubbed and with an acute large tooth. Tibiae quite elongate, almost straight and only weakly dilated towards

apex. Tarsi elongate, first segment more than twice longer than wide, second triangular and slightly longer than wide, third bilobed and transverse, fourth projecting from third by a slightly more than the length of third. Segments 3 and 4 of posterior left tarsus are missing. Claws fused on basal half. Habitus: fig. 1.

PARATYPE. Length 7.33 mm. Very similar to the holotype, its vestiture is somewhat abraded and less dense. Left antenna, fourth segment of mesotarsi and of left metatarsus are missing. Habitus: fig. 2. Spermatheca: fig. 3.

ETYMOLOGY. The new species is named after Lucio Saltini who collected in Syria the only two specimens known.

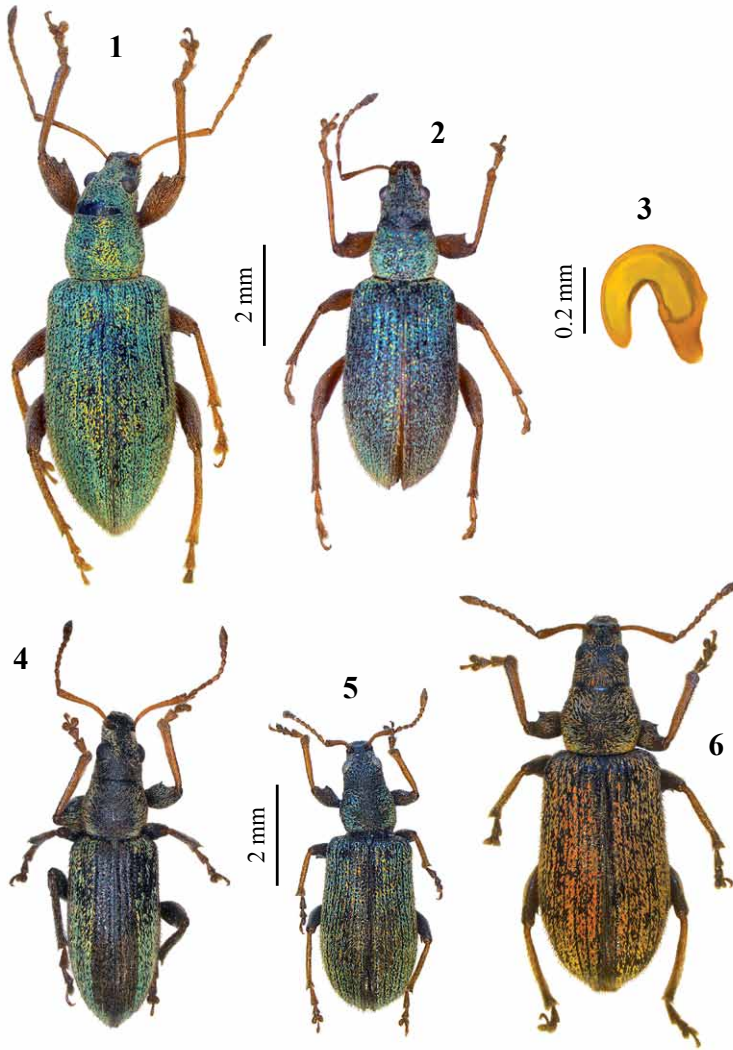
REMARKS. It is impossible to confuse the new species with any other described to date because of the combination of reddish epistome, absence of smooth longitudinal subcarinate line at the centre of pronotum and comparatively elongate segments of funicle and tarsi. Other *Parascythopus* lacking of longitudinal keel on pronotum have always entirely black rostrum, except some specimens of *P. intrusus*, from which however the new species immediately differs by its pronotal disk quite flat instead of subcarinate (although not smooth) and much more elongate funicular and tarsal segments. All remaining *Parascythopus* with reddish apex of rostrum show an obviously carinate pronotum.

Study of quite long series of adults of all the species hitherto described, comprised paratypes of *P. kadleci* Borovec & Magnano, 2005, and Japanese examples of *P. intrusus* and Dutch paratypes of its synonym *P. exulans* Heijerman & Magnano, 2000, allows to propose the key below which should facilitate recognition of all *Parascythopus* described to date, taking into account the great variability of some of its members.

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| 1 | Pronotum with a smooth and shiny median longitudinal area | 2 |
| 1' | Pronotum without such an area | 6 |
| 2 | Reddish apical plate of rostrum contrasting with the blackish colour of the remaining part of it | 3 |
| 2' | Apical plate of rostrum of the same blackish or brownish colour of the remaining part of it | 5 |
| 3 | Elytral interval 8 clothed by bright green scales similar to those on intervals 1 to 7, and strongly contrasting with the almost bare basal half of interval 10 and interval 9 which bear sparse piliform recumbent setae. Striae formed by fairly large subquadrate punctures. Length: 6.10-7.20 mm. Turkey | <i>P. abeillei</i> (Guillebeau) |

- 3' Elytral interval 8 clothed by the same piliform or slender lanceolate recumbent scales covering the intervals 9 and 10. Striae formed by minute punctures 4
- 4 Elytra in lateral view with half-lifted short setae at most as long as half the width of one interval. Elytral interval 8 with piliform setae and appearing thus darker than intervals 9 and 10 which bear slender lanceolate scales. Median longitudinal smooth area on pronotum wider, distinctly elevated. Length: 5.40-6.90 mm. Turkey, Lebanon *P. mirandus* (Desbrochers)
- 4' Elytra in lateral view with long perpendicularly raised setae as long as the width of one interval. Elytral intervals 8, 9 and 10 with the same slender lanceolate scales. Median longitudinal smooth area on pronotum narrower, slightly elevated. Length: 4.20-6.50 mm. Syria, Lebanon, Israel *P. kadleci* Borovec & Magnano
- 5 Interocular space more than twice the rostral width between antennae. Dorsum of rostrum without keels. First two segments of antennae longer than the third. Recumbent vestiture of elytra quite uneven, giving rise to more or less evident striate pattern. Length: 5.30-6.80 mm. Balkans *P. pinicola* (Kiesenwetter)
- 5' Interocular space less than twice the rostral width between antennae. Dorsum of rostrum with two keels. First two segments of antennae not longer than the third. Recumbent vestiture of elytra quite uniformly green. Length: 5.00-7.00 mm. Japan, United States, Canada, Norway, Netherlands, Germany, probably in all these countries introduced *P. intrusus* (Kôno)
- 6 Eyes rather strongly protruding from head outline Femora not darker than tibiae and tarsi. Dorsal vestiture of quite uniform bright metallic green scales 7
- 6' Eyes not strongly protruding from head outline. Femora usually darker than tibiae and tarsi. Apical plate of rostrum not differing in colour from the remaining part of it 8
- 7 Reddish apical plate of rostrum contrasting with the blackish colour of the remaining part of it. Segments of funicle elongate, the shortest at least 1.3 times longer than wide. First tarsomere twice longer than the second. Length: 7.33-7.67 mm. Lebanon *P. saltinii* n. sp.
- 7' Apical plate of rostrum at most sometimes only a little paler than the brownish colour of the remaining part of it. Segments of funicle relatively short, the shortest not more than 1.1 times longer than wide. First tarsomere less than 1.5 times longer than the second. Length: 5.00-7.00 mm *P. intrusus* (Kôno)
- 8 Interocular space less than twice the rostral width between antennae. Recumbent vestiture of elytra rather uniformly dark greenish. Length: 4.10-5.80 mm. Southern Italy *P. baudii* (Stierlin)
- 8' Interocular space at least twice the rostral width between antennae. Recumbent vestiture of elytra usually quite uneven, giving rise to more or less evident striate pattern 9
- 9 Pubescence distinctly raised on entire surface of elytra. Eyes moderately convex, clearly protruding from head outline. Length: 4.50-6.20 mm. Greece, Bulgaria *P. apollinis* (Miller)
- 9' Pubescence almost completely recumbent on basal half of elytra. Eyes feebly convex, hardly protruding from head outline. Length: 5.00-6.80 mm. Balkans *P. pinicola* (Kiesenwetter)

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Figs 1-6 – *Parascythopus saltinii* n. sp., holotype (1); paratype (2); spermatheca, paratype (3). *P. apollinis* female from Greece: Kalávrita-Kerpini (4). *P. baudii* female from Italy: Mount Pollino, Duglia (5). *P. pinicola* female from Bulgaria: Cepelare N of Smoljan (6).

SUMMARY

Parascythopus saltinii n. sp. from Syria is described and illustrated. The new species cannot be confused with any other by its apical part of rostrum reddish and its lack of pronotal keel in combination with the elongate funicular and tarsal segments. A key to species of *Parascythopus* Desbrochers is included. New combination is: *Parascythopus intrusus* (Kôno, 1948), **comb. nov.** from *Phyllobius* to *Parascythopus*.

RIASSUNTO

Una nuova specie di Parascythopus Desbrochers di Siria (Coleoptera, Curculionidae).

Parascythopus saltinii n. sp. di Siria è descritto ed illustrato. Questa nuova specie non può essere confusa con nessun'altra finora descritta a causa della contemporanea presenza della metà apicale del rostro rossiccia, dell'assenza di carena pronotale, e degli articoli del funicolo antennale e dei tarsi allungati. Viene stilata una chiave per l'identificazione di tutte le specie finora descritte, incluso *Parascythopus intrusus* (Kôno, 1948), **comb. nov.** rimosso da *Phyllobius* ed assegnato a *Parascythopus*.

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