

A taxonomic review of the genus *Oesyperus* (Coleoptera: Carabidae: Harpalini)

BORIS M. KATAEV

Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, Universitetskaya nab. 1, St. Petersburg 199034, Russia.

Abstract

Based on the study of the type material, the genus *Oesyperus* Andrewes, 1923, **stat. rest.** and three included species are redescribed and a key for determination of the species is provided. A relationship of *Oesyperus* within the Selenophori group is discussed. The following new synonymies are established: *Oesyperus* Andrewes, 1923 = *Merkliia* Ito, 2004, **syn. n.**, = *Merklophonus* Ito, 2005, **syn. n.**; *Oesyperus unctulus* Andrewes, 1923 = *Merkliia pubens* Ito, 2004, **syn. n.**

Key words: Coleoptera, Carabidae, Harpalini, *Oesyperus*, *Merkliia*, *Merklophonus*, India, taxonomy, synonymy

Introduction

Oesyperus Andrewes is one of the enigmatic taxa of Harpalini remaining today. Andrewes (1923) erected it as a genus for three species described by him in the same paper from southern India and later (Andrewes 1939) designated *Oe. unctulus* Andrewes, 1923 as the type species of this genus. According to Andrewes (1923), *Oesyperus* is quite distinct from any Harpalini genus known to him. He did not analyze the relationship of this genus but noted the similarity of this taxon in some characters (palpi and body pubescence) to the genus *Platymetopus* Dejean. Based on the examination of the single female of *Oe. unctulus*, Noonan (1985a) treated *Oesyperus* as a synonym of the selenophorine genus *Parophonus* Ganglbauer because both possess a densely pubescent dorsum and a peg-like seta on the apical stylomere, and concluded since there are no apomorphies *Oesyperus* did not warrant generic status. Without any explanation, *Oesyperus* was listed as a subgenus of *Parophonus* in both editions of the World catalogue of Carabidae published by Lorenz