



***Otiorhynchus (Nihus) grischunensis* sp. n.—a new species of the *O. rhilensis* species group from the Swiss Alps (Curculionidae, Entiminae)**

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Abstract

Otiorhynchus (Nihus) grischunensis sp. n. is described from Grisons, Switzerland. The new species was exclusively found in the alpine area and is thought to be endemic. *Otiorhynchus grischunensis* belongs to the *O. rhilensis* species group and is compared with its presumably closest relative, *O. rhilensis*. The new species fills a gap in the north-westernmost distribution of the *O. rhilensis* group and hence allows new insights into the biogeographical history of the group.

Key words: Curculionidae, Otiorhynchini, Switzerland, new species, biogeography, weevil

Introduction

The diverse beetle superfamily Curculionoidea is comparably well known in Switzerland. Presently, 1050 species are recorded (Germann, 2006). Several authors have contributed to discovery of the diversity of alpine weevils in Switzerland during the last 150 years: Charles Brisout de Barneville (1822–1893), Henri Tournier (1834–1904), and finally Wilhelm Gustav Stierlin (1821–1907). The latter additionally contributed substantially to the knowledge of Entiminae and especially of the genus *Otiorhynchus*, which is represented at present with 58 species in Switzerland (Germann, unpublished). Although the last description of a new and valid *Otiorhynchus* species based on material from the Swiss Alps dates back over 140 years (*O. subcostatus* Stierlin, 1866, with the Engadin-region of Grisons as one type locality), many interesting discoveries can still be made, as is demonstrated by the description of *Otiorhynchus grischunensis*. The southern border of the Alps still provides an especially interesting diversity to explore, often harbouring species that are restricted to small refuge areas as a result of ice age glaciations.

After the discovery of a single specimen of an *Otiorhynchus* species, unknown to the author, on the Berninapass in 2001, investigations were undertaken in the collections of different Swiss museums. In the Museum of Natural History, Genève (MHNG) two further specimens of this hitherto unknown and obviously very rarely found species, were located. Intensive collecting at the sites at Berninapass and Schiahorn in 2007 unfortunately did not reveal any further specimens.

The examination of the three specimens available resulted in the present description of *Otiorhynchus grischunensis*. This species is similar to *O. rhilensis* Stierlin, 1888 and, based on morphological evidence, belongs to the subgenus *Nihus* Reitter, 1912 sensu Magnano (1998, 2001b). Within the heterogeneous subgenus *Nihus*, with some known species showing broader distribution areas, such as *O. scaber* (Linné, 1758) or *O. uncinatus* Germar, 1824, *O. grischunensis* belongs to the *O. rhilensis* species group. The new species is described following and the consequences of its discovery are discussed. Only females of *O. grischunensis* are known.