



Article

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A new species of *Scirtes* (Coleoptera: Scirtidae) from southern Florida and the Caribbean

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Abstract

A new species, *Scirtes goliai* Epler, is described from southern Florida, the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands. It is distinguished by its small size, oblong habitus, brown coloration, laminate prosternum and distinctive genitalia. The species appears to be associated with mangroves.

Introduction

The family Scirtidae (“marsh beetles”) has been relatively ignored in North America. Tetrault (1967) revised the family for America north of Mexico and described several new species of *Cyphon* Paykull, but his dissertation was never published; his names remain unavailable. Two of his *Cyphon* species were subsequently described (Klausnitzer 1976); Young and Stribling (1990) dealt with the *Cyphon collaris* complex and described a new species; and a new genus, *Herthania* Klausnitzer, 2006, has been established that includes at least four Nearctic species, some of which were formerly placed in *Cyphon* (Klausnitzer 2006; Zwick 2011). Other than that little has been done with the taxonomy of the family for the Nearctic.

The family is also poorly studied in Central and South America, where the works of Champion (1897a, 1897b, 1918) remain the most recent and best sources of information. Other Neotropical species have been described by Chevrolat (1870), Guérin-Méneville (1861) and Makhan (2007). The genitalia of most Western Hemisphere species have not been studied or described.

Scirtes Illiger is one of the largest genera in the family, with approximately 360 species described worldwide (Yoshitomi and Ruta 2010). Only four described species are recorded from North America: *S. oblongus* Guérin-Méneville, 1861 (see Epler 2009), *S. orbiculatus* (Fabricius, 1801), *S. plagiatus* Schaeffer, 1906, and *S. tibialis* Guérin-Méneville, 1843. Ruta (2009) placed *S. californicus* Motschulsky, 1845, as an alticine chrysomelid; Epler (2010) considered *S. ovalis* Blatchley, 1924, and *S. piceolus* Blatchley, 1924, to be junior synonyms of *S. tibialis*.

When gathering material for my most recent work on Florida’s water beetles (Epler 2010), I found several specimens of an undescribed *Scirtes* from southern Florida. A subsequent visit to the Florida State Collection of Arthropods and discussion with head curator Mike Thomas produced several more specimens of this taxon from the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands. This new species is described below.

Methods

The majority of material used was mounted on points. Three males from Florida, collected in alcohol, were dissected and all body parts slide-mounted in Euparal. The genitalia were dissected from two point-mounted females, following relaxation, and slide-mounted in Euparal. For measurements using three or more specimens, the range is given followed by the mean.

Collection acronyms: FSCA—Florida State Collection of Arthropods, Gainesville, Florida; JHE—JH Epler collection, Crawfordville, Florida.