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Taxonomy of '*Euconnus* complex'. Part I. Morphology of *Euconnus* s. str. and revision of *Euconnomorphus* Franz and *Venezolanoconnus* Franz (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Scydmaeninae)

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Abstract

The large '*Euconnus* complex' of genera includes Cyrtoscydmini with long, slender and strongly projecting mesoventral intercoxal process. Diagnoses of individual genera, including that of *Euconnus* Thomson, are exceptionally poorly defined and need to be revised. In the first part of this revision a detailed morphology of *Euconnus* s. str. is described and illustrated, based on the type species of the genus. Two Neotropical members of the complex, genera *Euconnomorphus* Franz and *Venezolanoconnus* Franz are revised; their morphology is described and diagnoses re-defined. *Euconnomorphus pilosissimus* Franz, *Venezolanoconnus andinus* Franz, *V. caracasensis* Franz and *V. ranchoi* Franz are redescribed. *Venezolanoconnus minor* Franz is transferred to *Euconnus*, resulting in *Euconnus (incertae sedis) minor* (Franz), comb. n.

Key words: Insecta, Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Scydmaeninae, Cyrtoscydmini, *Euconnus*, *Euconnomorphus*, *Venezolanoconnus*, Neotropical, taxonomy

Introduction

Euconnus Thomson, 1859, comprising nearly 2500 described species, is one of the largest and most diverse animal genera known to science (Newton & Franz 1998). Most species were described by Herbert Franz, whose generic concept of such large genera as *Euconnus*, *Sciacharis* Broun, 1893 or *Scydmaenus* Latreille, 1802 was apparently very broad, and whose descriptions, diagnoses and especially illustrations are often inaccurate. In consequence, in order to identify most of over 90 genera and subgenera and over 3000 species of Scydmaeninae described by Franz (O'Keefe 1998), an examination of type series is unavoidable, and detailed redescrptions and revisions of diagnostic characters are required to build firm bases for a natural classification of this large subfamily of Staphylinidae. Unclear generic limits of the cosmopolitan and enormously large *Euconnus*, comprising 37 poorly defined subgenera and a large number of species not placed in any subgenus, represent a major challenge in the taxonomy of Cyrtoscydmini. While in Europe the subgenera of *Euconnus* seem well-defined and easy to determine, it is not a difficult task to find a number of described or undescribed Oriental, Afrotropical or Neotropical species showing characters intermediary between some subgenera (Jałoszyński, unpublished observations).

For a long time *Euconnus* was a 'dumping ground' for any Cyrtoscydmini showing the following set of characters: occipital constriction much narrower than vertex; tempora long; mesoventral intercoxal process developed as a high, long and narrow keel strongly projecting ventrally; metacoxae distinctly separated by a moderately broad metaventral intercoxal process; and aedeagus with slender, free (i.e., not fused to the median lobe) parameres (e.g., Franz 1980a). Failures in recognizing some of these characters by Franz himself resulted in transfers of entire subgenera *Magellanoconnus* Franz, 1967 and *Valdivioconnus* Franz, 1980a from *Euconnus* to *Sciacharis* (Franz 1980a, 1993), and the subgenera *Allomaoria* Franz, 1975 and *Austroconophron* Franz, 1971, originally established in *Euconnus*, were synonymized with *Sciacharis* s. str. (Franz 1980b, 1986a, 1989). On the other hand, *Maorinus* Franz, 1980b described as a subgenus of *Euconnus* and also similar to *Sciacharis*, was later elevated to the genus rank (Kuschel 1990). Many species of *Euconnus* and *Sciacharis* share a similar general