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## *Hypocaccus (Baeckmanniolus) laevis* Théron, 1963 is not synonymous with *H. (B.) virescens* Théron, 1963 (Coleoptera: Histeridae: Sapriniinae)

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### Abstract

The synonymy of *Hypocaccus (Baeckmanniolus) virescens* Théron, 1963 and *Hypocaccus (Baeckmanniolus) laevis* Théron, 1963 is rejected following the examination of the type specimens of both species. *Hypocaccus (Baeckmanniolus) laevis* **stat. restit.** is reinstated as valid. The two species differ mainly in the dorsal sculpture, pronotal shape, shape of protibia as well as in other minor characters. *Hypocaccus (B.) laevis* is newly recorded from Kenya.

**Key words:** Coleoptera, Histeridae, Sapriniinae, *Hypocaccus*, *Baeckmanniolus*, taxonomy, Afrotropical region

### Introduction

Théron (1963) described two species of *Hypocaccus (Baeckmanniolus)* from Somalia: *H. (B.) virescens* and *H. (B.) laevis*. In this same work, he briefly mentioned that *H. (B.) virescens* slightly resembles *H. (B.) dimidiatus* var. *hummleri* J. Müller, 1899 (currently a synonym of *H. (B.) dimidiatus dimidiatus* (Illiger, 1807)) from the Palaearctic Region and provided *H. (B.) laevis* with a remark that it differs from all other congeners by its completely glabrous elytra. Neither species was illustrated. Mazur (1997, 2011) treated *H. (B.) laevis* as a synonym of *H. (B.) virescens* without examining the type specimens of either species (Mazur, pers. comm., 2008). During studies on the subfamily Sapriniinae, I examined the type material of both species and concluded that they are not conspecific. In this contribution to the systematics and taxonomy of the Sapriniinae subfamily, both species are re-described and provided with SEM micrographs and drawings of male genitalia. Examination of all known specimens of both species suggests that while these two taxa are very similar to each other, they differ in their external morphologies.

### Material and methods

All dry-mounted specimens were relaxed in warm water for several hours or overnight, depending on the body size. After removal from their original cards, the beetles were side-mounted on triangular points and observed under a Nikon 102 stereoscopic microscope with diffused light. Some structures were studied using methods described by Ôhara (1994): male genitalia were macerated in a hot 10% KOH solution for about 15 minutes, cleared in 80% alcohol, macerated in lactic acid with fuchsin, incubated at 60°C for two hours, and subsequently transferred into a mixture of glacial acetic acid 1 part and methyl salicylate 1 part heated at 60°C for 15 minutes and cleared in xylene. Structures were then observed in  $\alpha$ -terpineol in a small glass dish. Digital photographs of the male terminalia were taken by a Nikon 4500 Coolpix camera and edited in Adobe Photoshop CS4. Based on the photographs or direct observations, the genitalia were drawn using a light-box Hakuba klv-7000. SEM photographs were taken with a JSM 6301F microscope at the laboratory of Faculty of Agriculture, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan. All available specimens were measured with an ocular micrometer. Beetle terminology and abbreviations follows that of Ôhara (1994) and Lackner (2010). Separate lines of the same label are demarcated by a slash (/). The following abbreviations are used throughout the text: