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On the genus *Limnocassis* Spaeth, with description of two new species from South Africa (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae: Cassidinae)

LECH BOROWIEC¹ & LUKÁŠ SEKERKA²

¹Department of Biodiversity and Evolutionary Taxonomy, University of Wrocław, Przybyszewskiego 63/77, 51-148 Wrocław, Poland. E-mail: cassidae@biol.uni.wroc.pl

²Department of Entomology, National Museum, Cirkusová 1740, CZ-193 00 Praha 9, Czech Republic. E-mail: sagrinae@seznam.cz

Abstract

Limnocassis compacta sp. nov. and *L. regularis* sp. nov. are described from South Africa. They are well distinguished from *Limnocassis pumilio* (Boheman, 1854), the only known species in the genus, in fine and mostly regular elytral punctation. Colour photographs of all species and new distribution data for *L. pumilio* are given.

Key words: Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae, Cassidinae, Cassidini, *Limnocassis*, new species, South Africa

Introduction

The genus *Limnocassis* was proposed by Spaeth in Hincks (1952) as monotypic for *Oxylepus turneri* Spaeth, 1933 from the Cape Province in the Republic of South Africa. Borowiec (1999) synonymized *O. turneri* Spaeth, 1933 with *Cassia pumilio* Boheman, 1854 and *Limnocassis pumilio* (Boheman, 1854) remained as the valid name for this taxon. The genus and its only species were redescribed in detail by Borowiec (2002) including colour photograph.

The genus is superficially very close to the genus *Cassida* Linnaeus, 1758, particularly to the members classified in the subgenus *Cassidulella* Strand, 1928. The similarity is emphasized by the similar body structure with very convex elytra, moderately wide and strongly declivous explanate margin of the elytra, punctation of the elytra with mixed regular rows and additional irregular punctures on some intervals, simple claws and short antennae with the third antennomere shorter than the second. *Limnocassis* differs in very narrow and deeply canaliculate intercoxal part of the prosternal process and especially in elevated lateral margin of the prosternal alae. The clypeus in *Limnocassis* is covered with finely to moderately coarse punctures with faint clypeal grooves while *Cassidulella* species have punctation of the clypeus coarse and clypeal grooves well marked. The explanate margin of elytra in *Limnocassis* is extremely declivous, almost perpendicular to the abdominal surface. Members of *Limnocassis* are similar also to the genera *Oxylepus* Desbrochers, 1884, *Ischyronota* Weise, 1891, *Nabathaea* Spaeth, 1911, and *Seminabathaea* Borowiec, 1994 but differ in mostly irregular elytral punctation. The last two mentioned genera also differ in the last tarsomere being about twice as long as the third and projecting beyond its anterior margin while *Limnocassis* has the last tarsomere shorter than the third.

In the material studied recently we found two species belonging to the genus *Limnocassis* but distinct from *L. pumilio*. Their descriptions are given below.

Material and methods

Photos were taken using a Nikon SMZ 1500 stereomicroscope with a Nikon Coolpix 4500 photo camera as several separate layers and combined in the Helicon Focus software. Exact label data are cited for type material. A forward slash (/) separates different lines within each label and a double slash (//) different labels.