



Oroides pakaluki new genus and new species of Coccidulini from New Guinea (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae)

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Abstract

Oroides gen. nov., along with *O. pakaluki* sp. nov. (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae, Coccidulini) from New Guinea is described and illustrated. Placement of this genus within Coccinellidae is discussed.

Key words: Entomology, taxonomy, new genus, new species, New Guinea, Cucujoidea, Coccidulini

Introduction

The discovery of this very unusual beetle dates back to June 1991 and a beetle sorting event that happened at the Bishop Museum following the Coleoptera Larvae Workshop organized by the University of Hawaii and Bishop Museum. Adam Ślipiński and James Pakaluk, enthusiastic beetle taxonomists, discovered three specimens among unsorted material from New Guinea and after cursory examination genuinely believed they had discovered the largest species (almost 4.5 mm long) of Corylophidae, a “mega corylophid”. Unfortunately the specimens remained unstudied for all these years until our interests in phylogeny of Corylophidae (Ślipiński *et al.* 2009) brought them again to our attention.

Detailed examination of the specimens and the subsequent dissections revealed that in spite of the external corylophid features, the beetle is actually a member of Coccinellidae, subfamily Coccinellinae as defined by Ślipiński (2007) and Seago *et al.* (2011). This strange beetle is here described as a new genus and is dedicated to our late friend Jim Pakaluk who shared our emotions with its discovery and who passed away in May 2009.

The placement of *Oroides* within recognised tribe in Coccinellinae is somewhat problematic because of unusual features of the beetle and very unsatisfactory tribal classification of the group, pending further research (Ślipiński 2007; Ślipiński & Tomaszewska 2010; Seago *et al.* 2011). It is here included in broadly defined Coccidulini (Ślipiński 2007), based on apparent similarities to many genera of this group and the lack of characters that may justify its placement in few well defined tribes of that subfamily (as discussed in Seago *et al.* 2011).

The flattened, broadly oval or “limuloid” body of *Oroides* suggests a specialized habitat for this beetle, possibly an association with some social Hymenoptera. It’s discovery and morphological features present an interesting analogy to the African genus *Cleidostethus* Arrow, a coccinellid found in nests of stingless bees, and originally described as a member of Coccinellidae but subsequently found to belong to Corylophidae (Bowstead *et al.* 2001).

Material and methods

Studied material is deposited in the Bernice P. Bishop, Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA (BPBM) and the Museum and Institute of Zoology, PAS, Warszawa, Poland (MIZ).

Measurements were made using an ocular micrometer attached to an Olympus (SZH 10) dissecting microscope as follows: (TL) total length, from apical margin of clypeus to apex of elytra; (PL) pronotal length, from the middle of anterior margin to base of pronotum; (PW) pronotal width at widest part; (EL) elytral length along suture