



<http://dx.doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.3721.2.6>

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:9FB5C00A-01B4-4CFD-BDD6-6556E9641A01>

A new species of *Apocellus* Erichson, 1839 (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae) from Argentina with ecological notes

MARIANA CHANI-POSSE & ERICA E. SCHEIBLER

Laboratorio de Entomología, Instituto Argentino de Investigaciones de las Zonas Áridas (IADIZA, CCT CONICET, Mendoza), Casilla de Correo 507, 5500 Mendoza, Argentina. E-mail: mchani@mendoza-conicet.gob.ar; escheib@mendoza-conicet.gob.ar

Abstract

Apocellus andinus sp. nov. from Argentina is described and illustrated, detailed information on its ecology is provided, and a key to species of *Apocellus* from southwestern South America is given. This species was collected in riparian areas of a mountain dam at 1355 m elevation, and it was found in an unstable wetland environment in association with species tolerant to human perturbations. Lectotypes are designated for *Apocellus argentinus* Bernhauer, 1908 and *Apocellus opacus* Bernhauer, 1908.

Key words: Andean region, distribution, mountain wetlands, new species, Oxytelinae, *Apocellus*

Introduction

The genus *Apocellus* Erichson (1839) (Staphylinidae: Oxytelinae) is currently represented by 38 species restricted to the New World (or the “Americas”) (Herman, 2001; Newton and Thayer, 2005). Twenty-nine of these species are found throughout the Neotropical region (Newton *et al.*, 2000) including southern South America (i.e. southern Chile and Argentina), which has been largely recognized as a biogeographical unit *per se* (e.g. Newton and Thayer, 2005; Morrone, 2009). *Apocellus* species have been variously found in forest leaf litter and open grassy areas, on dung, on bare soil among lawn grasses, along streams near moss and litoral or riparian areas of lakes (Newton *et al.*, 2000; Brunke *et al.*, 2011; Webster *et al.*, 2012), also in association with ants in Mexico (Navarrete *et al.*, 2002).

Four species have been cited from southwestern South America (Herman, 2001; Newton and Thayer 2005), within the so-called South American transition zone and Andean region (Morrone, 2009). Only one of them, *Apocellus mendozanus* Steinheil 1869, was redescribed after its original description (Lynch-Arribálzaga, 1884). Until the present work, no information has been reported on the ecological traits of any of the South American species of *Apocellus*.

The present paper is based primarily on material from a mountain wetland area of the Mendoza River Watershed collected by the junior author. Material obtained from the samples included a few specimens of *Apocellus* which proved to be an undescribed species.

The objectives of this study are to describe a new species of *Apocellus*, provide a key to species of *Apocellus* from southwestern South America and contribute to the knowledge on distribution and ecology of this species.

Material and methods

Study area. The province of Mendoza stretches at the foothills of the Andes Cordillera along west-central Argentina between 32° and 37° 35' South and 66° 30'–70° 35' West, over an area of 150,839 km². It features an arid to semiarid climate with an annual rainfall average of about 250 mm. Precipitation in the mountains occurs mostly as winter snow, ranging from 250 to 300 mm per year (Departamento General de Irrigación 1997, 1999).