

Synonymic and other notes on Histeridae (Coleoptera)

by

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ABSTRACT. — Three new synonymies are reported in the family of Histeridae. *Atribalus* Bickhardt, 1921, appeared not a subgenus of *Tribalus* Erichson, 1834, but a separate genus in the subfamily Histerinae.

Hister somali Lewis, 1885 = *Hister (Atholus) vatovai* G. Müller, 1944 (syn. nov.).

In the Latin diagnosis of *Hister somali* the mesosternum is described as: “. . . antice rotundato emarginato . . .”; in the English comment Lewis speaks of a non-sinuate mesosternum, which is contradictory to the Latin text. Examination of the holotype in London (labelled: “Somali land Deyrolle, 7-8-85”, with an additional museum label: “G. Lewis coll. BM 1926-369”) revealed, that the mesosternum is not emarginate, and that this species must be transferred to the genus *Atholus*. Because of the lapsus in the Latin text, *H. somali* has hitherto figured in the catalogues and keys under *Hister* s. str.

Examination of the type of *Hister (Atholus) vatovai* G. Müller from Mogadiscio (Somali), preserved in the Museum of Trieste, showed that this species is synonymous with *Atholus somali*. In addition to the localities mentioned by Müller, this species occurs also in Kenya, as shown by a specimen in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie in Leiden, labelled: “Kenya, Tsavo NP Voi Mzinga, 600 m, 21-22/XII/1972, J. Krikken, night time sample from elephant dung”.

Sphyracus anjubaulti Marseul, 1864 = *Hetaerister defectivus* Desbordes, 1920 (syn. nov.).

Comparison of the types of *Hetaerister defectivus* and *Sphyracus anjubaulti* in Paris showed, that both animals are identical. The drawings in the publication of Desbordes are very inaccurate; the picture shows the animal too wide in proportion to the length. *H. defectivus* has to be dropped into synonymy. The error of Desbordes is probably due to the fact, that *S. anjubaulti* has not a bisinuate mesosternum, whereas the genus *Sphyracus* belongs to the tribus Exosternini, characterised by a bisinuate mesosternum. Marseul did not attach as much weight to the form of the mesosternum as later workers on Histeridae did, and probably he was right. Consistently applied this character leads to very unnatural separations of apparently closely related species to different tribes (e.g. *Phelister* Marseul and *Pseudister* Bickhardt).

To settle the question whether *S. anjubaulti* is congeneric with the other species of *Sphyracus* a revision of the whole genus is needed. For the time being the genus *Hetaerister*, created for *H. defectivus*, must be considered as synonymous with *Sphyracus*.

Hister rotundatus Kugelann, 1792 = *Hister quadristriatus* Thunberg, 1794 (syn. nov.).

In his new catalogue of Histeridae (in press) Mazur puts *Saprinus rugifer* (Paykull, 1808) in synonymy with *Saprinus quadristriatus* (Thunberg, 1794). Dahlgren (in litt.) examined the sole specimen of *Hister quadristriatus* in Thunberg's collection in Uppsala; this specimen can be considered as the type. It appeared to be a specimen of *Gnathonus rotundatus* (Kugelann), which name has priority over *quadristriatus*. This elucidation of the identity of *H. quadristriatus* restores the validity of *Saprinus rugifer* (Paykull).

Genus *Atribalus* Bickhardt (new status).

Bickhardt (1921) noted that *Tribalus mixtus* Marseul, 1857, takes a very isolated position within the genus *Tribalus* by its well-developed dorsal striae and the rather coarse denticulation of the front tibiae. For this reason he created for this species (and for an undescribed neotropical species) the subgenus *Atribalus*.

Examination of the type of *T. mixtus* in Paris, as well of other specimens from various localities showed that this species has no setigerous punctures on the labrum, as other *Tribalus* species have. Wenzel (1944) pointed out that setigerous punctures on the labrum are an

important systematic character of the subfamily Tribalinae. This detail has been overlooked by former workers on Histeridae. Consequently *T. mixtus* is to be considered generically distinct from *Tribalus*, and must be transferred to the subfamily Histerinae, tribe Histerini. As *T. mixtus* is not congeneric with any other genus of the Histerini known to me, *Atribalus* Bickhardt, 1921, is here raised to full generic status, with *Atribalus mixtus* as type species. *Atribalus* stands near *Rhypochares* Marseul by its very short prosternal lobe and the absence of lateral pronotal striae; the difference in the form of the fore-tibiae separates these genera.

There are a few other species, which have been placed in the subgenus *Atribalus*, viz. *striatipennis* Thérond, 1965, *kazabi* Thérond, 1967, and *pinsapo* Mazur, 1979. In the descriptions no mention is made about the presence or absence of setae on the labrum, so it cannot be decided whether they are congeneric with *Atribalus mixtus*. This matter has still to be elucidated.

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