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INHOUD: PIETER H. VAN DOESBURG JR.: Sexual dimorphism in *Paxillus* Macleay (Coleoptera, Passalidae) (Preliminary note) (p. 61). — L. W. G. HIGLER: *Oxyethira fischeri* n. sp. A new *Oxyethira* species from Madeira (Trichoptera: Hydroptilidae) (p. 62). — B. J. LEMPKE: Trekvinders in 1972 (p. 64). — ED. WAGNER: Eine neue *Orthotylus*-Art von der Insel Zypern (Hem. Het. Miridae) (p. 72). — BR. VIRGILIUS LEFEBER: Interessante vangsten van Hymenoptera Aculeata in 1972 (p. 74). — C. VAN ACHTERBERG: The braconid types of Szépligeti in the Leiden Museum (p. 79). — Literatuur (p. 71: H. WIERING; p. 78: W. N. ELLIS). — Korte mededeling (p. 80: P. F. BOTTERWEG).

Sexual dimorphism in *Paxillus* Macleay (Coleoptera, Passalidae) (Preliminary note)

by

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While preparing a faunistic survey of the Surinam Passalidae, I was struck by the marked differences in pilosity in the specimens of several *Paxillus* species. Suspecting a sexual basis for this phenomenon, I checked the sex of a fair number of specimens by preparing their genitalia. The result confirmed that for these species this difference is indeed of sexual nature, and an easy way of distinguishing between male and female.

This dimorphism is manifest by different development of the hair-tufts on and around the shoulders, on the upper side of the middle tibiae, and, to a lesser extent, on the underside around the hind corners of the pronotum. In the female the pilosity of these parts is thicker, and the hairs longer than in the male. No other external differences could be detected.

This finding has taxonomical consequences, because the presence or absence of hair-tufts on the shoulders has been used in *Paxillus* as a specific character. See, for instance, C. Moreira, 1921, Coléoptères Passalides du Brésil, *Annls Soc. ent. Fr.* 90: 271, or H. Luederwaldt, 1934, Revisão do genero *Paxillus* (Col. Lamell. Passalidae), São Paulo, 11 pp. G. J. Arrow (1906), however, attributed this phenomenon to wear of these parts during life of the beetles; see: A contribution to the classification of the Passalidae, *Trans. ent. Soc. London* 1906 (4): 443.

Thus a new approach to the taxonomy of this genus is highly desirable. Because many of the original specific descriptions are more or less insufficient, study of the type specimens will be necessary.

