



Discovery of *Antireicheia* in Cameroon with description of four new species and discussion on phylogeny and distribution of endogean Reicheiina (Coleoptera: Carabidae: Scaritinae: Clivinini)

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Abstract

The endogean carabid genus *Antireicheia* Basilewsky, 1951, previously known from the eastern and southern Africa and Madagascar is, for the first time, reported west of the Congo basin. Four new species are described and illustrated: *A. demirei* **sp. nov.** (Cameroon: Mt. Oku), *A. hintelmanni* **sp. nov.** (Cameroon: Mt. Oku), *A. deuvei* **sp. nov.** (Cameroon: Mt. Bamboutos) and *A. camerounensis* **sp. nov.** (Cameroon: Bafut, Nguemba forest). A key to Cameroonian *Antireicheia* species is provided. The composition of the subtribe Reicheiina, its monophyly, world distribution, as well as zoogeographical implications of its discovery in Western Africa, are discussed.

Key words: Coleoptera, Carabidae, Reicheiina, *Antireicheia*, taxonomy, new species, key, Cameroon, Mt. Oku, Mt. Bamboutos, Nguemba forest

Introduction

The Old World carabid subtribe Reicheiina consists of 16 genera, 143 species and 25 subspecies of apterous and endogean beetles with the body length averaging about two millimetres (Basilewsky 1980; Magrini & Bulirsch 2005). These anophthalmic beetles are predominantly known from the type series and are collected by sifting forest leaf litter or hand picked from under large stones deeply sunk into the ground. The majority of the genera (13 among 16) and species are known from the Mediterranean Region with most of the remaining taxa inhabiting the Afrotropical Region (Fig. 30). Recently three new Reicheiina species have been described from Laos, Vietnam and Japan, respectively. Each of them is known only from the holotype, and attributed to one new, and, reluctantly, to one Mediterranean and one Afrotropical genus (Balkenohl 2005). The discovery of Reicheiina in Pacific Asia indicates a significant distributional disjunction of closely related wingless, blind and presumably poorly dispersing endogean beetles. Alternatively, it could suggest a non-monophyletic nature of the subtribe composed of unrelated and convergently similar soil dwellers.

No Reicheiina species were previously described west of the Congo basin, although Basilewsky (1980: 294, fig. 9) reported undescribed *Antireicheia* in Cameroon collected by Philippe Bruneau de Miré and preserved in the Muséum national d'histoire naturelle, Paris, France. Bruneau de Miré, a prominent French entomologist, who from 1964 to 1974 worked in the Centre de recherches agronomiques de Nkolbisson in Yaounde, actively collected endogean beetles and later described two most remarkable Cameroonian Anillini: *Carayonites* Bruneau de Miré, 1986 and *Bafutyphlus* Bruneau de Miré, 1986, members of another group of poorly understood endogean carabids. Recently one of us (VVG) collected a single female of an *Antireicheia*