



Two new synonymies in the genus *Praocis* (Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae)

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The genus *Praocis* Eschscholtz, 1829 belongs to Praocini, an endemic Neotropical tribe of Pimeliinae from southern South America. According to the last revision (Kulzer 1958) *Praocis* comprises 77 species and 7 subspecies arranged in ten subgenera, distributed from central Peru to the southern part of Patagonia in Argentina and Chile.

Lacordaire (1830) described *Praocis rotundatus* collected by himself in Mendoza (Argentina): Paramillos de Uspallata. Later, Laporte (1840) described *Praocis rotundata* from Chile: Coquimbo. Both nominal species are available and they belong to different subgenera according to the current classification of Kulzer (1958).

Praocis rotundata Lacordaire, 1830 was interpreted by Solier (1840) as a synonym of *P. sulcata* Eschscholtz, 1829 (a Chilean species) based on a misidentification: he studied specimens of *P. rotundata* Lacordaire and concluded they were *P. sulcata*. It is evident because he stated that the specimens were from Argentina, and cited the following character states (among others): clypeal suture as horizontal deep groove covered by frons, and outer and marginal carinae fused forming a wide carina irregularly punctured (wide lateral margin). Due to the former character state, Solier (1840) placed this species (*Praocis sulcata*) in his second subdivision of the second division: *Orthogonoderes*, currently recognized as a subgenus of *Praocis* (Kulzer 1958). After examination of the type specimens of *Praocis sulcata* Eschscholtz in MNHUB, we agree with Kulzer (1958) in placing this species in the subgenus *Praocis* (*Praocis*) Eschscholtz on the basis of the opposite character states: clypeal suture as vertical shallow groove not covered by frons and lateral margin well marked with a finer edge.

Solier (1851) redescribed *Praocis rotundata* Laporte, which agrees with the description of *P. sulcata* Eschscholtz. In this opportunity, Solier (1851) placed *P. rotundata* in the section 1, *Praocis* [current subgenus *Praocis* (*Praocis*)].

All subsequent authors of catalogs listed twice the name *Praocis rotundata*: *P. rotundata* Lacordaire as synonym of *P. sulcata* Eschscholtz, and *P. rotundata* Laporte as a valid species. In his revision of the genus *Praocis*, Kulzer (1958) was not able to examine the type of *P. rotundata* Lacordaire, and he considered Lacordaire's original description as rather poor. Based on these facts, Kulzer (1958) stated that it is not clear if this species represented a synonym of *P. sulcata* or an own [a valid] species (translation from German of Bernd Jaeger, MNHUB). Concerning *P. rotundata* Laporte, Kulzer (1958) did not place this species in any of the 10 subgenera or in his list of species incertae sedis (p. 93-94). Both Kulzer (1958) and Peña (1966) cited only *Praocis rotundata* Lacordaire (as synonym of *P. sulcata*) in their respective studies.

The objectives of this note are to resolve a homonymy in the genus *Praocis*, existing since 1840 for the species *Praocis rotundata* Lacordaire and *Praocis rotundata* Laporte, and to propose two new synonymies in the genus *Praocis*.

The present study is based on examination of type specimens from the following collections and curators: Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt Universität, Berlin, Germany (MNHUB, Manfred Uhlig, Bernd Jaeger), Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, France (MNHN, Claude Girard, Antoine Mantilleri), and Natural History Museum, Basel, Switzerland (NHMB, Eva Sprecher). Additional material was studied from Instituto Argentino de Investigaciones de las Zonas Áridas, Mendoza, Argentina (IADIZA, Sergio Roig-Juñent) and Laboratorio de Entomología Ecológica, Universidad de La Serena, La Serena, Chile (LEULS, Jorge Cepeda-Pizarro).

We examined the types of *Praocis sulcata* Eschscholtz, *P. soror* Kulzer, and for *P. rotundata* Lacordaire we studied two specimens from ex coll. Dejean housed in MNHUB and it is probable that these specimens were seen or studied by Lacordaire (Bernd Jaeger, pers. comm.). According to Horn & Kahle (1935) the types of Lacordaire should be in the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS) but no Lacordaire types of Tenebrionidae were found there (Jerome Constant and Noël Mal, pers. comm.). The types of Laporte should be in the MNHN (Horn & Kahle, 1935) but even with the help of Claude Girard, we did not find any Laporte types. According to Cambefort (2006) the Heteromera specimens from Lacordaire's and Laporte's collections are at the MNHN, but no types of *Praocis* of these authors were found there (Antoine Mantilleri, pers. comm.).