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Taxonomy of the *Alloraphes-Stenichnaphes-Parastenichnaphes* complex: *Stenichnodes* complicates the picture (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Scydmaeninae)

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Abstract

Examination of the holotype of the type species of *Stenichnodes* Franz revealed that morphological structures of this Afrotropical genus are nearly identical with those of later described Oriental *Parastenichnaphes* Franz. Consequently, *Parastenichnaphes* is reduced to a subgenus of *Stenichnodes*, resulting in *Stenichnodes (Parastenichnaphes) sumatrensis* Franz, **comb. n.** and *Stenichnodes (Parastenichnaphes) ceylonensis* Franz, **comb. n.** The subgenus *Parastenichnaphes* differs from *Stenichnodes* s. str. in notosternal sutures of the prothorax complete (and not obliterated anteriorly), subtriangular (and not very narrow and carinate) prosternal process and absence of lateral metaventral carinae. *Stenichnodes* and its type species are redescribed.

Key words: Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Scydmaeninae, Cyrtoscydmini, *Stenichnodes*, *Parastenichnaphes*, Afrotropical, Chad, Oriental

Introduction

The *Alloraphes-Stenichnaphes-Parastenichnaphes* complex of genera comprises taxa that have very small (often about 1 mm in length) and slender body, a subtriangular head with eyes located posteriorly, very long maxillary palps with particularly elongate palpomeres III and IV, a submentum with lateral sutures, a bell-shaped pronotum with transverse ante-basal groove, rudimentary basal elytral foveae and subtrapezoidal metaventral intercoxal process not separating metacoxae and with a deep narrow median notch. *Alloraphes* Franz, 1980a, *Stenichnaphes* Franz, 1980b of New Zealand and Oriental species of *Parastenichnaphes* Franz, 1984 were revised by Jałoszyński (2005, 2013, 2015). These genera seemed to be rather problematic even to their author, Herbert Franz, and some transfers of misplaced species included in a wrong component of this complex were necessary: *Scydmoraphes brasiliensis* Franz, 1967 was transferred to *Alloraphes* (Franz 1980a) and later to *Stenichnaphes* (Franz 1989); *Alloraphes myrmecophilus* Franz, 1980a was transferred to *Parastenichnaphes* (Franz 1989) and later back to *Alloraphes* (Jałoszyński 2013); *Stenichnaphes sumatrensis* Franz, 1984 and *Stenichnaphes ceylonensis* Franz, 1982 were originally placed in a subgenus *Parastenichnaphes*, later elevated to the genus rank (Franz 1989). *Alloraphes*, *Stenichnaphes* and *Parastenichnaphes* are not possible to distinguish in dorsal view and only examination of fine ventral characters and genital structures makes it possible to identify genus. Because of very small body, examination of ventral structures often requires scanning electron microscopy or transparent mounts studied under a compound microscope.

Already revised species of *Alloraphes* are exclusively Neotropical, *Stenichnaphes* is known from New Zealand, but it also includes species of yet unclear status from Madagascar and Brazil, and *Parastenichnaphes* is restricted to Sumatra and Sri Lanka (Jałoszyński 2005, 2013, 2015). Later, another member of this interesting group of genera was described from Mexico and French Guyana, *Obesoconnus* Jałoszyński, 2014. However, its two species deviate from the typical body shape of this complex (they are very stout, nearly suboval in shape) and do not pose any identification problems.

Stenichnodes Franz, 1966 was the first new genus of Scydmaeninae described by Herbert Franz, one of over 30 genera of ant-like stone beetles he established during nearly half a century of his taxonomic activity. Only one