

A new species of *Longitarsus* Latreille, 1825 from Mexico (Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae, Alticinae, Longitarsini)

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Abstract

Longitarsus bethae sp. n. from Mexico is described, diagnostic illustrations are included; this species is under study as a biocontrol agent of *Lantana camara* L. (Verbenaceae), a worldwide weed.

Key words: Biocontrol, *Lantana*, new species, Neotropical, weed.

Resumen

Se describe *Longitarsus bethae* sp. n. proveniente de México, se incluyen ilustraciones de diagnóstico; esta especie ha sido estudiada como agente del control biológico de *Lantana camara* L. (Verbenaceae), una maleza de distribución mundial.

Palabras claves: Control biológico, *Lantana*, maleza, Neotrópico, especie nueva.

Introduction

Some species of *Longitarsus* have been used as biocontrol agents of weeds (Baars 2001). The Institute Plant Protection Research, Pretoria, South Africa (IPPR) has been studying a species of *Longitarsus* from Mexico, with root feeding larvae which attack *Lantana camara* L. (Verbenaceae), as a potential biocontrol agent. *L. camara* is one of South Africa's worst invasive weeds and has been the object of biocontrol programs during the last four decades (Baars 2001).

The genus *Longitarsus* is distributed worldwide, and is the largest in the Alticinae with almost 500 species (Konstantinov & Vandenberg 1996). In the Neotropical Region it is represented by 82 species and 3 subspecies (Savini unpublished data), 29 are known from Central America and 7 from Mexico (Furth & Savini 1996). Identification of Neotropical