

Description of the mature larva of *Gonioctena pseudogobanzi* Kippenberg, 2001 (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae: Chrysomelinae) and key to the larvae of the subgenus *Spartoxena*

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Abstract

Mature larva of *Gonioctena (Spartoxena) pseudogobanzi* Kippenberg, 2001 is described and illustrated for the first time, based on specimens collected on *Genista umbellata* (L'Hér.) Dum. Cours. [Fabaceae] in southeastern Spain. Diagnostic characters for the identification of species within the subgenus *Sparoxena* Motschulsky, 1860 are number of dorsal tubercles of abdominal segments, shape of tarsal claw, shape of labrum and disposition of microtrichia of epipharynx. A key to known larvae of subgenus *Spartoxena* is provided, along with figures illustrating the diagnostic characters. Notes on the distribution and host plant of *G. pseudogobanzi* are included.

Key words: Chrysomelidae, *Gonioctena*, *Spartoxena*, *Gonioctena pseudogobanzi*, larva, key

Introduction

The genus *Gonioctena* Chevrolat, 1837 (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae: Chrysomelinae) is widely distributed in the Holarctic region and contains more than 70 species classified into nine monophyletic subgenera (Mardulyn *et al.*, 1997). Among them, *Spartoxena* Motschulsky, 1860 is comprised of eight species (Kippenberg, 2001), restricted to southwest Europe and north Africa, with its maximum diversity in the Iberian Peninsula (four species). Adult taxonomy of *Spartoxena* has received much attention due to the intraspecific variability and the external interspecific similarity, which have produced a high number of synonyms and thus the need of several taxonomic works clarifying the true status of several taxa from the Iberian Peninsula (Bechyné, 1957) or North Africa (Bourdonné & Doguet, 1979), and more recently a revision based on male genitalia (Kippenberg, 2001). Finally, a review of the female genitalia within the subgenus provided diagnostic characters for the identification of females (Baselga, 2007).

Contrary to the advanced state of knowledge of adult taxonomy, larval taxonomy of *Spartoxena* is far from completion, as it is for the whole genus, with only 17 Palaearctic species known at the larval stage (Steinhausen, 1994; Baselga & Novoa, 2004). This condition is not particular of *Gonioctena*, but involves all leaf beetles. In the Palaearctic region, we only know the larvae of about 22% of Chrysomelidae and 37% of Chrysomelinae (Steinhausen, 1996). Within *Spartoxena*, the larvae of only three species are currently known: *G. gobanzi* (Reitter, 1902) from the Alps, which is included in the key for the Central European species (Steinhausen, 1994), and *G. aegrota* (Fabricius, 1798) and *G. leprieuri* (Pic, 1911) from the Iberian Peninsula, recently described and illustrated (Baselga & Novoa, 2004). The aims of this paper are (i) to describe for the first time the mature larvae *G. (Spartoxena) pseudogobanzi* Kippenberg, 2001, providing diagnostic characters for its identification, and (ii) to provide an identification key for the larvae of the subgenus *Spartoxena*.