



Cercyon castaneipennis sp. n., an overlooked species from Europe (Coleoptera: Hydrophilidae)

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Abstract

Cercyon castaneipennis sp. n. is recognised as a species distinct from *C. obsoletus* (Gyllenhal). Apart from small differences in the morphology of the aedeagus, both species can be separated by the structure of the mentum, the shape of the antennal club and the structure and colouration of the elytra. *Cercyon castaneipennis* is currently known from Central Europe and the southern part of North Europe. In the Netherlands, at the western border of its range, it is considered a recent immigrant, as records before the year 2000 are lacking. A lectotype for *C. obsoletus* is designated.

Key words: Coleoptera, Hydrophilidae, *Cercyon*, Europe, Palaeartic Region, new species

Introduction

The hydrophilid genus *Cercyon* Leach, 1817, consists of very small to moderate sized (c. 1–6 mm long), oval, more or less strongly convex beetles (Hansen 1991). Hansen (1999) mentions eight subgenera, of which *Cercyon* s. str. is by far the most speciose. Hebauer (2002, 2003) erected three more subgenera. Currently over 250 species are recognised, of which c. 40 species occur in the West-Palaeartic Region (Hansen 1999, 2004, Short & Hebauer 2006), belonging to the following five subgenera: *Arcocercyon* Hebauer, 2003 (2 spp.) (Fikáček 2005), *Cercyon* (c. 35 spp.), *Dicyrtocercyon* Ganglbauer, 1904 (1 sp.), *Paracercyon* Seidlitz, 1888 (1 sp.) and *Paracycreon* d'Orchymont, 1942 (1 sp.). They live in a wide variety of decaying organic material.

The new species described here belongs to *Cercyon* s. str., and is very similar to the Palaeartic *Cercyon obsoletus* (Gyllenhal, 1808). This strong resemblance could explain why it remained unnoticed until now. It certainly does not represent any of the known Palaeartic species. For the same reason it is likely of Palaeartic origin, and hence not conspecific with one of the poorly characterized species from outside this region.

Both *Cercyon obsoletus* and the new species can be easily recognised within European *Cercyon* s. str. by their large size (3.2–4.2 mm) in combination with the presence of a small humeral plica on the elytra (figured by Hansen (1987)). The similar *C. impressus* (Sturm, 1807) is on average smaller (< 3.5 mm), lacks the humeral plica and has a denser punctuation of the metaventral disc. From an extensive (re)description is refrained here, as *Cercyon obsoletus* s. l. has been accurately characterised in several synoptical works (Ganglbauer 1904, Hansen 1987, Huijbregts 1982, Vogt 1971). These descriptions cover both *C. obsoletus* and the new species.

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