



## A new species of *Hydroscapha* LeConte from northwestern Venezuela (Coleoptera: Myxophaga: Hydroscaphidae)

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### Abstract

During the course of recent fieldwork on Venezuelan aquatic insects, a new species of Hydroscaphidae, *Hydroscapha perijaensis* Hall & Short **sp. n.**, was discovered and is herein described, representing the first known South American species of the genus. The new species was found in association with rock seepages in both the wet and dry seasons. Locality data is provided, plus dorsal and ventral habitus images of both sexes, along with key characters separating the new taxon from other species within the genus.

**Key words:** Neotropical Region, aquatic beetles, taxonomy, new species

### Introduction

The genus *Hydroscapha* LeConte 1874 is the largest of three genera that comprise the family Hydroscaphidae. The genus currently consists of 15 species distributed in most major biogeographic regions except the Neotropics and Australia/Oceania. Species of *Hydroscapha* occur as larvae and adults in streams, hot springs and pools, feeding upon algae (Vanin *et al.* 2005). For reviews of Hydroscaphidae, including descriptions of the genus *Hydroscapha*, see Beutel (1998), Fikčėk & Šípkov (2009), Hall (2000), Jäch (1995), Löbl (1994), Löbl (2003), Reichardt (1973), Reichardt & Hinton (1976) and Vanin *et al.* (2005).

In the New World, only a single species of the genus has been recorded, *H. natans* LeConte, which is found in western North America. It was consequently somewhat of a surprise when the second author came upon a new species of *Hydroscapha* in the foothills of the Serrania de Perija, the mountain range that forms the northwestern boarder between Venezuela and Colombia. Here, we describe this new species and provide notes about its biology and habitat. The description of *H. perijaensis* **sp. n.** marks the first species of the genus to be described from South America, making the Neotropics the only region known to have all three described genera of the family (the others being *Yara* Reichardt and *Scaphydra* Reichardt).

### Materials and methods

Specimens of adults representing both sexes were coated in gold and photographed dorsally and ventrally using a scanning electron microscope. Additional specimens were cleared in 10% KOH, processed through progressions of EToH to 100%, dissected and slide-mounted in Hoyer's Medium to observe critical internal and external characters. Measurements and proportions were averaged among specimens examined.