



Description and taxonomic position of a new genus and species of southern African pollen beetle (Coleoptera: Nitidulidae: Meligethinae)

P. AUDISIO¹, J. JELÍNEK², A.R. CLINE³, E. MANCINI⁴, M. TRIZZINO¹, P. CERRETTI¹ & G. ANTONINI¹

¹Dipartimento di Biologia e Biotecnologie “Charles Darwin”, Sapienza Università di Roma, Via Borelli 50, I – 00161 Rome, Italy. E-mail: paolo.audisio@uniroma1.it; marco.trizzino@uniroma1.it; gloria.antonini@uniroma1.it

²Department of Entomology, National Museum, Kunraticke 1, CZ – 14800 Praha, Czech Republic. E-mail: JJ.Nitidula@seznam.cz

³Plant Pest Diagnostics Center, California Department of Food & Agriculture, 3294 Meadowview Road, Sacramento, CA 95832–1448, USA. E-mail: acline@cdfa.ca.gov

⁴Dipartimento di Scienze di Sanità Pubblica e Malattie Infettive, Sapienza Università di Roma, Piazzale Aldo Moro 5, I – 00185, Rome, Italy. E-mail: emiliano.mancini@uniroma1.it

Abstract

The pollen beetle *Restiopria biondii* **gen. nov., sp. nov.**, from Western Cape, South Africa, is described. The taxonomic position of *Restiopria* is discussed. The new genus is not noticeably related to any other known Meligethine, although it exhibits a few shared characters with *Pria* Stephens 1830. Larval host plants of the single known species are male flowers of two species of the monocot family Restionaceae.

Key words: *Restiopria biondii* **gen. nov., sp. nov.**, South Africa, host-plants, Restionaceae

Introduction

A preliminary reexamination of the genus–level taxonomy of the subfamily Meligethinae (Audisio *et al.* 2009) was recently published. Subsequently, the partially unsorted material of Meligethinae collected some years ago in South Africa by the senior author, and tentatively referred to *Pria* Stephens, 1830 and related African genera, included a distinct new genus.

This paper describes this new southern African genus and species and discusses the phylogenetic position of the new taxon within the subfamily Meligethinae, as inferred from morphological evidence and ecological data. The present paper forms part of an upcoming revision of the Southern African species of the subfamily Meligethinae as a whole (P. Audisio *et al.* unpublished).

Material and methods

The new species described herein was collected during recent fieldtrips to South Africa (1994, 2005) organized by the senior author and our colleague Prof. Maurizio Biondi, Dept. of Environmental Sciences of the L’Aquila University, Italy. The studied material is preserved in P. Audisio’s collection, Rome (CAR), in the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria (TMSA), in the National Museum (Natural History), Prague, Czech Republic (NMPC), and in A.R. Cline’s Collection, currently housed at the California State Collection of Arthropods USA (CSCA). Other comparative material has been borrowed for study from several South African institutions, including the National Collection of Insects, Plant Protection Institute, Pretoria (SANC), the Iziko Museum, Cape Town (SAMC), and the National Museum, Bloemfontein (BMSA). Other undetermined material and type material of previously described species of African Meligethinae were made available for study by the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle, Paris (MNHN), the Zoological Museum, Lund University, Lund, Sweden (MZLU), the Zoologische Staatssammlung, München, Germany (ZSM) and by the Natural History Museum, London, England (BMNH). Terminology follows Audisio (1993) and Audisio *et al.* (2009).