



***Afrophloeus*, a new genus of African weevils of the tribe Embrithini (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Entiminae), with description of a new species and notes on the composition of Embrithini**

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Abstract

A new genus, *Afrophloeus* **gen. n.**, is described for three South African weevil species assigned to the tribe Embrithini Marshall: *Trachyphloeus spathulatus* Boheman (type species), *T. squamifer* Boheman and *Afrophloeus dilaticornis* **sp. n.** *Afrophloeus squamifer* has been introduced to Australia in 1992 and become an agricultural pest in South Australia in recent years. All three species are illustrated and keyed. The concept and composition of Embrithini is discussed and revised. Thirteen genera are newly transferred to Embrithini: *Bryochaeta* Pascoe, *Cosmorhinus* Schoenherr, *Cycliscus* Schoenherr, *Glyptosomus* Schoenherr, *Porpacus* Schoenherr and *Syntaphocerus* J. Thomson from the tribe Oosomini Lacordaire and *Bicodes* Marshall, *Goniorhinus* Faust, *Holorygma* Marshall, *Lecanophora* Aurivillius, *Neobicodes* Hustache, *Sympiezorhynchus* Schoenherr and *Zeugorygma* Marshall from the tribe Myorhinini Marseul. Two genera are excluded from Embrithini, *Epibrithus* Marshall and *Rhyncholobus* Gahan, left without tribal assignment in Entiminae. In its revised concept the tribe Embrithini includes 67 genera of African Entiminae.

Key words: Entiminae, Embrithini, *Afrophloeus*, taxonomy, Afrotropical and Australian region

Introduction

Our mutual interest in these small weevils was kindled twenty years ago when we attempted identification of specimens reported as damaging chicory (*Cichorium intybus*, Asteraceae) in South Africa. Although they superficially agreed with a number of species in that country described in the genus *Trachyphloeus* Germar, it was readily apparent that these specimens and the relevant described species do not actually belong in *Trachyphloeus*, a genus restricted to the Palaearctic region (with one species introduced to the Amsterdam Island in the southern Indian Ocean) and differing in several important characters from similar southern African genera. It in fact became evident to us that these South African weevils belong in a different tribe altogether, the Embrithini, which is well represented in Africa by many genera. Due to the confused and largely artificial composition of the tribes of Entiminae in Africa (see Oberprieler 1988, 1995; Borovec *et al.* 2009) and to other research priorities, we did not pursue the taxonomy of these weevils further at the time. However, the recent discovery of one of these same species attacking canola and vetch in Australia prompted us to take up our investigations into these weevils again and describe and diagnose the relevant taxa.

The tribe Embrithini was established by Marshall (1942) for a group of African Entiminae with trisetose mandibles (termed Trichaetognathi) and metatibial corbels previously placed in the tribe Oosomini (Lacordaire 1863) but differing from *Oosomus* Schoenherr and related genera in having connate tarsal claws. Marshall (1942) divided the Embrithini into two groups of genera, one having ten striae on each elytron and the other twelve or more. In the former group he enumerated 24 genera from East Africa and one from South Africa (*Mesphrigodes* Marshall), and in the latter he afterwards (Marshall 1943) included 17 genera from largely tropical Africa. He did not, however, extend his study of this tribe to southern Africa, and as a result of this and due to his scant diagnosis of the tribe (characterised only by possessing trisetose mandibles, metatibial corbels and connate claws) the Embrithini have remained an ill-defined and poorly constituted group both in southern Africa and overall. Marshall