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A review of the natural history of adult Cetoniinae (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae) from Argentina and adjacent countries

OSVALDO DI IORIO

Entomología. Departamento de Biodiversidad y Biología Experimental. Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales. 4° Piso, Pabellón II, Ciudad Universitaria C1428EHA, Buenos Aires, Argentina. E-mail: megacyllene@yahoo.com.ar

Abstract

A compilation of the known natural history of adult Cetoniinae (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae) from Argentina and adjacent countries is provided. Food items of adult Cetoniinae include pollen and/or nectar (flower visitors), sap and/or slime flux, ripened fruits on plants, green tissues and leaves, and honey. Of the 36 species of Cetoniinae from Argentina, food items are known only for 11 species (30.5%). Attraction to light and bait-traps, adult activity periods, vertebrate predators, and the occurrence in bird nests are presented and discussed. Other insects that share the same food sources and bait-traps with Cetoniinae are mentioned.

Key words: fruit chafers, food items, activity periods, predators

Introduction

Cetoniine beetles (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Cetoniinae) are widely known as “fruit chafers” due to their occurrence on ripened fruits, but they are also flower visitors and sap feeders. Willemstein (1978) listed all worldwide Cetoniinae known to visit flowers, but this list comprises all kind of foods ingested by Cetoniinae. Regretably, the countries and localities of all records were not given nor were adult activities and the parts of the plants visited.

The present compilation of the known natural histories of adult cetoniine beetles is the continuation of the systematic account and the geographic distributions of the Cetoniinae from Argentina and adjacent countries (Di Iorio 2013). New data about adult food items, attraction to light and bait traps, activity periods, their occurrence in birds' nests and predators are provided.

Materials and methods

For each species treated here, literature and new records of food items are listed in the text and/or in tables. Records of specimens captured in bait-traps, light traps, bird nests, and/or in other concealed situations are also included following the previous ones. Countries, states (Brazil), departments (Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay) and/or provinces (Argentina) are ordered from north to south and from west to east. All localities from Argentina mentioned here were plotted in maps by Di Iorio (2013).

All identifications of the specimens examined of Cetoniinae from Argentina and adjacent countries are based on Di Iorio (2013). Suprageneric classification and family-group names of Cetoniinae follow the work of Bouchard *et al.* (2011). Authors and years of specific names of Cetoniine follow Krajčák (1998, 1999) and Di Iorio (2013). The nomenclature in other insect groups was based on Di Iorio (2005) (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae), Hayward (1973) (diurnal Lepidoptera), and Wood (1993) (Coleoptera: Platypodidae). The species of Elateridae (Coleoptera) were identified following Casari (1998, 2002). Botanical names follow Wiersema & León (1999) for cultivated and exotic plants, and Zuloaga & Morrone (1999) and Stehmann *et al.* (2009) for native and naturalized exotic plants. Bird names were updated from the Comitê Brasileiro de Registros Ornitológicos (2007).

Whereas some of these dead insects were represented in the nests by fragments alone, others were nearly entire, with delicate parts (antennae, tarsi) intact, or they were entire but with signs of predation. These insects were interpreted as prey remains of *A. annumbi* (in the cases of fragments), or food items given to the nestlings but not eaten (entire insects with signs of predation) (Turienzo & Di Iorio 2008).

The raptor *Speotyto cunicularia partridgei* (Aves: Strigidae) has the greatest number of records of prey items for any bird in Argentina (Pardiñas & Cirignoli 2002), but no Cetoniinae have yet been recorded as prey except one undetermined species in Brazil (Table 12). *Marmarina tigrina* is mentioned here for the first time as a prey item (Fig. 20), and this constitutes the second record of a cetoniine as prey of a bird from Argentina after Turienzo & Di Iorio (2008), and the second Cetoniinae for this raptor bird (Table 12).

Cetoniinae in bird nests. It is known that several species of insects use bird nests as a shelter during autumn and winter (hibernating, in diapause), and others also use the nests in summer (aseasonal quiescence) (Turienzo & Di Iorio 2008, 2010, 2011). Coincidentally, the adults of *G. litigiosa* in some bird nests were found in both winter (hibernating) and summer (aseasonal quiescence). No other reasons explained the presence of *G. litigiosa* in some birds nests because no larvae of Cetoniinae were found in a total of 695 birds nests in 13 bird families sampled between 2005 and 2011 (Turienzo & Di Iorio, personal observations). Ramirez Martinez (2010) also found five adults of one undetermined Gymnetini in a total of 67 nests examined of *Amazona aestiva* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Aves: Psittacidae) from Mato Grosso do Sul (Brazil), but the exact date was not given.

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