



Taxonomic notes on the genus *Anthaxia* Eschscholtz, 1829 (Coleoptera: Buprestidae: Anthaxiini) 1.

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Abstract

In the present paper I propose the following taxonomic changes: *Anthaxia* (*Haplanthaxia*) *bosdaghensis* Obenberger, 1938 (= *cavazzutii* Bílý, 1980 **syn. nov.**); *A.* (*Anthaxia*) *ephippiata* Redtenbacher, 1850 (= *kreuzbergi* Richter, 1944 **syn. nov.**); *A.* (*H.*) *pleuralis* Faimaire, 1883 (= *parapleuralis* Obenberger, 1929 **syn. nov.**); *A.* (*H.*) *scylla* Levey, 1985, removal from synonymy (= *aprutiana* Gerini, 1955 unavailable name); *A.* (*A.*) *truncata* Abeille, 1900 (= *lgockii* Obenberger, 1917 **syn. nov.**; = *talyshensis* Bílý, 1991 **syn. nov.**; = *adiyamana* Svoboda, 1994 **syn. nov.**).

Lectotypes for *A.* (*A.*) *kreuzbergi*, *A.* (*H.*) *parapleuralis* and *A.* (*A.*) *truncata* are designated. All the studied types are illustrated, together with their original data labels. Each of the valid species is placed in its respective species-group, and notes are given on the distribution.

Key words: Taxonomy, new synonymy, lectotype designation, Coleoptera, Buprestidae, *Anthaxia*

Introduction

It is known that in the past most early authors had to work on small numbers of specimens collected in areas little visited and hardly reachable in those times, often examining very few or even single specimens collected by explorers, or distributed by entomological dealers. Moreover, communication between contemporary specialists, and knowledge of their respective work was not so readily available at that time, a fact that unintentionally led various authors to describe the same species under different names. Many other taxa were intentionally described based on specimens that showed very slight differences from species already known even from the same area, in a mistaken sense of creationism according to which, every specimen showing even a tiny morphological or chromatic difference deserved to be named as different. In some unfortunate cases, this even happened because of a hardly concealed literary ambition or due to a competitive attitude with other authors. In some cases, particularly for species with a wide distribution, or which attracted attention because of their beauty, the same species has been described many times. This proliferation of names makes taxonomic revisions a difficult task for anyone willing to make things clearer.

In the light of the current situation, it is obvious that many of these descriptions should now be revised. This has become easier with the more abundant material now available for study, from much wider areas.

During my twenty years of working with the genus *Anthaxia* Eschscholtz, 1829 in the field, laboratory and in studying the literature, I have come across many such cases, and careful examination of the species involved, showed that many described species are separated only by characters that in my opinion are obviously intraspecific variability.

Concerning this kind of variability, it is my strong belief that if not interpreted correctly, it may often mislead even specialists, and can give rise to the unjustifiable proliferation of false taxa, through the description of a multitude of new species and subspecies largely based on variable and inconsistent characters, as still happens at present.

In the present work, I propose some taxonomic changes in the genus *Anthaxia*. Changes are based on examination of type specimens and recently collected material. See Baiocchi & Magnani (2008, 2011) and Baiocchi (2013) for prior taxonomic changes.

Anthaxia (A.) truncata belongs to the *A. (A.) spinosa* Abeille, 1900 species-group that, as a result of this study, is currently comprised of *A. (A.) spinosa* Abeille, 1900, *A. (A.) truncata* Abeille, 1900, *A. (A.) stateira* Bílý, 1983 and *A. (A.) badghyzica* Bílý, 1991.

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