



<http://dx.doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.3999.1.7>

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:60B5AB6B-C586-41E5-9370-80BF56025D1F>

Description of two new species related to *Pterostichus (Aphaonus) arcanoides* Lorenz, 1998 from the West Transcaucasia (Coleoptera: Carabidae: Pterostichini)

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Abstract

Two new carabid beetle species, *Pterostichus (Aphaonus) mariamae* sp. nov. and *Pterostichus (Aphaonus) svetlanae* sp. nov., related to an enigmatic mountainous representative of the subgenus *Aphaonus*, *P. (Aphaonus) arcanoides* Lorenz, 1998, are described from the Abkhazian midlands (Tsebelda Plateau and Mtsara district). Discriminative features of the new species in the subgenus are briefly discussed.

Key words: Carabidae, *Pterostichus*, *Aphaonus*, new species, Abkhazia, Caucasus

Introduction

The subgenus *Aphaonus* Reitter, 1887 of *Pterostichus* Bonelli, 1810 comprises now about 8–9 described species (Kryzhanovskij *et al.* 1995; Lorenz 2005) and several ones being still pending a description (personal communications of Dr. I.A. Belousov and Dr. K.V. Makarov) from the Caucasus, forming several more or less distinctly outlined groups (Semenow 1899, etc.). In 1962 Kurnakov established from a single female a subgenus *Scaritomorphus* of *Pterostichus* and described its only constituent *P. arcanus* Kurnakov, 1962 from the high mountains of Abkhazia without precise locality of origin (“chaîne Bzybienne à peu près à 40 km au Nord de Soukoumi”). He compared it in the given original description with the subgenus *Aphaonus*, which appeared to be the closest relative of this new Caucasian taxon. Later Kryzhanovskij and Abdurakhmanov (1983) elevated the status of *Aphaonus* to the genus level and simultaneously synonymized *Scaritomorphus* with this genus. In the late nineties collectors finally succeeded in capturing individuals of *P. arcanus* from the Bzyb Mt. Range, including male specimens. Based on this material Kryzhanovskij (1989) confirmed the close relationship of *Aphaonus* and *Scaritomorphus*. In 1995 Kryzhanovskij *et al.* treated *Aphaonus* as a separate Pterostichine genus comprising 2 subgenera, *Aphaonus* s. str. and *Scaritomorphus*, however surprisingly attributed to the latter *A. compressus* (Rost, 1891), as its second consubgener. No comments have been given to the former Semenow’s (1899) attribution of this species to his “Sectio I” of *Aphaonus*, which seems to us absolutely correct (see Zamotajlov 1999).

In 1998 Lorenz again reduced the status of *Aphaonus* to the subgeneric level and offered a replacement name *arcanoides* Lorenz, 1998 for *P. arcanus* Kurnakov, 1962, since this name has been preoccupied in the genus *Pterostichus* by Casey (1913) (see Bousquet 2012, etc.). He reiterated this approach in the second edition of his “Systematic list of extant ground beetles of the world” (Lorenz 2005). Bousquet (2003) also followed this classification in the “Catalogue of Palaearctic Coleoptera”. In this manuscript, we abstain from discussion of the taxonomic status of *Aphaonus* as even larval characters seem to confirm its generic rank (Brinev 1999). However it is necessary to note that the objective taxonomic position of *P. arcanoides* within the (sub)genus *Aphaonus* still remains unclear. This species obviously possesses a number of highly adaptive autapomorphic character states