

**DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF
POECILIUM FAIRMAIRE, 1864 FROM SYRIA
(COLEOPTERA: CERAMBYCIDAE)**

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ABSTRACT: *Poecilium antonini* n. sp. in described from NW Syria. The new species is closely related to *Poecilium alni* (Linnaeus, 1767) from Europe, Caucasus and Iran from which it can be easily distinguished by the reddish colored pronotum and the shining body.

KEY WORDS: Cerambycidae, Cerambycinae, Callidiini, *Poecilium*, new species, Syria.

The aim of the present paper is to describe a new species belonging to the genus *Poecilium* Fairmaire, 1864, closely related to *P. alni* (Linnaeus, 1767), identified among the Cerambycidae collected in north-western Syria (Slinfah) by our colleague and friend Antonin Wrzeczionko (Horni Sucha, Czech Republic) and by one of us (Tomas Tichy).

***Poecilium antonini* n. sp.**

(Fig. 1, 2)

Material examined

Holotype ♂: Syria, Jabal An Nusaynyah, Slinfah,, 1300-1800 m., 18.IV.2010, A. Wrzeczionko lgt.; paratypes 2 ♂♂ and 3 ♀♀ same collecting data like the holotype. Holotype in coll. P. Rapuzzi, paratypes in coll. A. Wrzeczionko (Horni Sucha, Czech Republic), T. Tichy, P. Rapuzzi and G. Sama.

Etimology

The new species is dedicated with pleasure to our colleague and friend Antonin Wrzeczionko who collected the most type specimens.

Description of the holotype

Body length: 6 mm. Body black except reddish pronotum, basal third of elytra, legs and antennae. Head short, with sparse punctures, with several long erect black hairs between the eyes. Pronotum reddish, shining, slightly wider than long, moderately convex on the disc, strongly constricted toward the base; its discal surface sparsely punctate and covered with many long black erect hairs mainly at base and on the sides. Elytra relatively short, black except the basal third and with two ivory-colored stripes on each elytron, analogously to *P. alni*; elytral surface shining on the basal third (which is sparsely covered with setigerous points in correspondence to the reddish color) and on the apical third (which is almost unpunctate), and densely, shallowly, microsculptured in the middle, between the ivory stripes. Elytrae sparsely clothed with moderately long erect black hairs on the discal surface, with short black setae at sides chiefly on the basal third, and with a tuft of dense erect black hairs behind the scutellum. Antennae short, hardly

extended beyond the middle of elytra, reddish, all segments, from the 3rd, blackened at apex. Legs reddish with the clubs of femora darker on the upper side.

Variability

The specimens of the type series shows a different extension of the reddish colour on elytra and pronotum. One specimen is completely black except the club of middle femora which are dark-brown. Female differs from male by the usual sexual dimorphism of the genus: shorter antennae, thinner legs and more parallel-sided elytra. The length of paratypes varies from 4 to 5 mm in males and from 5 to 6 mm in females.

Discussion

Poecilium antonini n. sp. is closely related to *Poecilium alni* (Linnaeus, 1767) from which it can be easily distinguished by the shining body, more sparsely punctate pronotum and elytra, shorter elytra, antennae end legs, and the reddish color of pronotum. Moreover *P. antonini* n. sp. has shorter pronotum and denser black hairs on the post-scutellar tuft.

Range and biology

The genus *Poecilium* Fairmaire, 1864 (sensu Sama, 2002) is represented in the south-eastern Mediterranean area by four species: *Poecilium lividum* (Rossi, 1794) (southern Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel), *P. magnanii* Sama & Rapuzzi, 1999 (southern Turkey), *P. rufipes syriacum* (Pic, 1891) (from southern Turkey to northern Israel) and *Poecilium alni* (Linnaeus, 1767). The former, which is the more closely related to *P. antonini* n. sp., is recorded from Europe, Caucasus [here represented by *P. alni alnoides* (Aurivillius, 1912)], Transcaucasia and northern Iran (here as *P. alni elburzense* Holzschuh, 1977). In Turkey it is known especially from the northern provinces (Bolu, Istanbul, Osmaniye, Sakarya and Trabzon), but it has also been recorded from Adana: Nurdagi geçidi (Holzschuh, 1977; Adlbauer, 1988) and from Kuşçubeli pass (Gaziantep border) (Özdikmen et al., 2010); specimens collected in these localities are regarded as not different from *P. alni alni* ("aus Eichenästen geschlüpft, besitze ich jedoch 6 Exemplare, die eindeutig der Stammform *P. alni alni* zuzurechnen sind") (Holzschuh, 1977).

All specimens of the type series of *P. antonini* n. sp. were obtained from larvae feeding in dead branches of Oak (*Quercus* sp.).

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Figure 1. *Poecilium antonini* n. sp.. Holotype male .



Figure 2. *Poecilium antonini* n.sp.. Paratype female.