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Two generic transfers and a synonymy for some North American Elateridae (Coleoptera)

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During various studies, three instances of necessary taxonomic change were found. These changes are provided here to clarify the taxonomy of these taxa for those studies.

Agriotella debilis (LeConte) new combination

Drasterius debilis LeConte (1884) was originally placed into a group of species now largely assigned to Aeolus Eschscholtz [type species: Elater scriptus Fabricius]. In contrast, Drasterius Eschscholtz [type species: Elater binaculatus Rossi] is contemporarily interpreted as restricted to Eurasia and Africa, except for D. debilis.

Drasterius and Aeolus possess the salient traits diagnostic for the tribe Conoderini (Johnson 1995). Drasterius debilis possesses a suite of structural traits that clearly place it within Elaterinae, tribe Pomachiliini. A survey of the described genera from this tribe suggests the best placement of D. debilis is in Agriotella.

Negastrius americanus (Horn) new combination

Coptostethus americanus Horn (1871) was generically assigned in a provisional sense. Cobos (1970) reduced Coptostethus Wollaston to a subgenus of Cardiophorus Eschscholtz (Cardiophorinae). Neither Horn (1891), Stibick (1971, 1990), or Wells (1996) revisited the taxonomic question of this species.

The holotype of C. americanus was compared with specimens of C. femoratus Wollaston, the type species of Coptostethus. It was immediately evident that the subfamily assignment of C. americanus was in error. Coptostethus americanus possesses the characteristics given by Stibick (1971, 1990) and Wells (1996) for Negastrius (Negastriinae), and is therefore transferred to this genus.

Paroedostethus Van Dyke

Paroedostethus was established by Van Dyke (1932) to accommodate his new species P. relictus, from southern California. The holotype of P. relictus was examined and is morphologically similar to Hypogonus rotundicollis (Say) and H. sulcicollis (Say). Further, it possesses the characteristics for defining Hypogonus Kiesenwetter (Gurjeva 1989). Consequently, P. relictus is here transferred to Hypogonus and Paroedostethus becomes a new synonym.

Literature Cited


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