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New record for *Tesarius* Rakovic in South America (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Aphodiinae: Psammodiini)

The genus *Tesarius* Rakovic (1981) is an interesting group of wingless, nearly eyeless (yet probably functionally blind), sand dune-dwelling scarabs. There are presently 5 species in the genus, *T. sulcipennis* (Lea 1904) from Tasmania and 4 species in western North America. One of these native North American species, *T. caelatus* (LeConte 1857) has been found in Britain (Johnson 1975). The genus is reviewed by Rakovic (1981, 1984), who provides a key to species.

While studying specimens in the collection of Henry Howden, Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, Canada, I discovered 4 specimens of *Tesarius* from Chile. After comparing these with specimens of all North American species and with descriptions of *T. sulcipennis* in Rakovic (1981, 1984), I decided the Chilean specimens were *T. caelatus*. In my opinion, they were probably brought to Chile in ships ballast. This dispersal phenomenon is discussed by Lindroth (1957) and Crowson (1981). These specimens represent a country and continental record for the genus. Their label data: CHILE: Colchagua, Pichilemu, 13-X-1967, L. E. Pena.

Tesarius caelatus remains a rarely collected species, both in North America and in Great Britain (pers. comm. 2001, J. Mate, Natural History Museum, London). In general, flightless psammodiine scarabs are rarely collected and poorly known taxonomically. Yet, they have extremely interesting habits and tremendous potential for studying zoogeography and evolution. The only way to collect them regularly is by sifting the sand they inhabit; which can be labor intensive. However, these beetles can be very abundant in small areas and once found, can be collected in great numbers. Recent survey work for *Geopsammodius* Gordon and Pittino, another flightless psammodiine, has produced no less than 6 undescribed species in the southeastern United States alone. The genus *Geopsammodius* is known to occur as far south as French Guiana (Lavalette 1999), and at present no intervening populations have been discovered. More sifting is needed to collect psammodiines throughout the World. This is Entomology Contribution No. 913,

Bureau of Entomology, Nematology & Plant Pathology.

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