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A *LONGITARSUS* FROM THE AZORES
(COLEOPTERA, CHRYSOMELIDAE)

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With 6 figures

ABSTRACT: *Longitarsus azoricus* sp. n. is described and illustrated from a short series collected on the Azores from where the genus had previously not been recorded. It is compared with the Macaronesian *isoplexidis* group with which it shares some apparent similarities in colour.

RESUMO: É descrita e ilustrada uma nova espécie, *Longitarsus azoricus* sp. n., cujo género até agora ainda não tinha sido referenciado para estas ilhas. Esta espécie é comparada com o grupo *isoplexidis* da Macaronésia, com o qual aparentemente partilha algumas semelhanças na cor.

Longitarsus azoricus sp. n.

Figs. 1 - 6

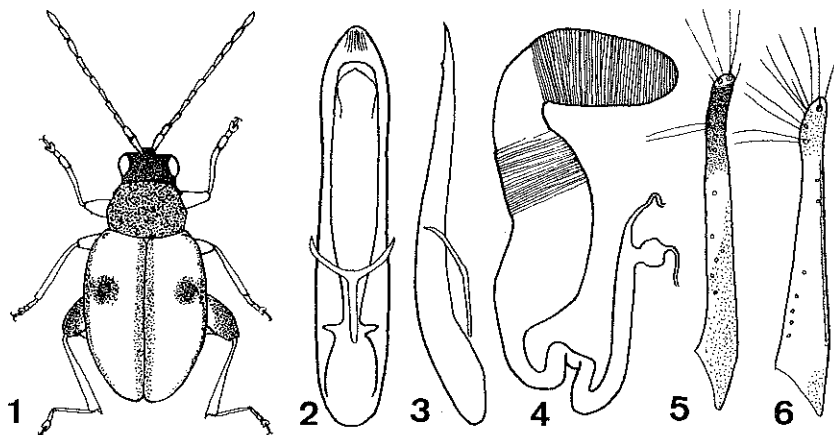
Diagnosis. This is a fairly small species with dark forebody and yellow elytra provided with dark markings, among others on each a conspicuous, blackish, rounded patch just before the middle. (Fig. 1).

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DESCRIPTION

Size. 1.70-2.05 x 0.85-1.05 mm..

Colour. Head black, pronotum piceous, elytra yellow with brownish or blackish markings: on sutural region (scutellum included) a fairly broad stripe, on humeral callus a speck, and on each elytron just in front of middle a rounded patch, outward connected with a marginal stripe. Mouthparts brown, antennal segments 1-3 yellow, following ones darker and darker outwards, legs yellow except outer and anterior portion of metafemora brown, under side of body black to piceous.



Figs.1 - 5. *Longitarsus azoricus* sp.n. , Santa Maria. 6 - *L. persimilis* WOLLASTON, Tenerife. 1- Habitus. 2, 3 - Penis. 4 - Spermatheca. 5, 6 - Ovipositor.

Head. Frons with medial ridge strongly convex, tubercles inconspicuous, two to three times longer than broad, frontal suture very fine, often ill-defined. Vertex strongly reticulate, mat. Antennae about seven times as long as body, very slender.

Prothorax. About 1.4 times broader than long. Pronotum finely, not very densely punctured, distinctly but not strongly reticulate, fairly shining.

Elytra. About 1.5 times longer than broad, suboval, with distinct humeral callus; surface even, without any indication of impressed longitudinal striae, more strongly and densely punctured than pronotum, with distinct but weak reticulation. Macropterous.

Legs. Of moderate length; first protarsal segment of male dilated and as broad as third segment, and about 1.5 times as long as broad. Metatibial spur short, half as long as apical width of tibia.

Penis. (Figs. 2 and 3) about 0.7 mm. in length, subparallel. Ventral sulcus

broad and parallel-sided in apical half, towards base narrowed but not disappearing.

Spermatheca. (Fig. 4) about 0.250 mm. in maximum length; tube simple with a single incomplete coil. Ovipositor (Fig. 5) about 0.370 mm. in length, narrow, with apical portion cylindrical; setae about seven in number, of very varying length.

MATERIAL

Holotype, male: Azores, Santa Maria, Pico do Facho, 16.VI.1990, P. BORGES *leg.* (left antenna and a few tarsal segments missing). Paratypes: Male, Terceira (with no specified locality), 2.VIII.1987, P. OROMI *leg.* & coll.. Male, 2 females, Santa Maria, as holotype; male as holotype, except 17.VI, L. MENDES *leg.*

Biology. Little known. The Santa Maria specimens were all collected in pastures (P. BORGES *in litt.*).

Geographical distribution. Apparently an endemic of the Azores where it is known from two islands fairly distant from each other, one belonging to the central, the second to the eastern group of islands.

Relationship. Because of the pale elytra, each with a dark, rounded patch near the middle, *azoricus* at first glance seems to be an Azorean representative of the *isoplexidis* group (BIONDI, 1986), an endemic Macaronesian group, known from Madeira, the Canaries and the Cape Verdes.

A closer examination, however, reveals that *azoricus* differs from the recognized taxa of the group in quite a number of respects which makes a closer relationship doubtful.

In the *isoplexidis* group the elytra patch, if present, always reaches behind the elytra middle, at least in part. One of the species often lacks all brown markings on its elytra.

Moreover the body size is larger, *L. jandiacus* BIONDI with a stated maximum length of 2.4 mm. possibly excepted. The frontal ridge is less markedly convex. The elytra are longer and narrower, about 1.6-1.8 times as long as broad, and provided with up to eight longitudinal impressions smoothed out towards the base and the apex (not to be taken for punctural striae which are absent in the genus). The penis is pointed and often slightly 'nipped', with the ventral sulcus suboval and restricted to the apical half. The spermathecal tube is longer and more complicated than in *azoricus* with several complete coils. The ovipositor (Fig. 6) is poorly pigmented and its apical portion not regularly cylindrical, and carries

more numerous setae. As far as I am aware this organ has hardly previously been used in the taxonomy of the genus but might perhaps turn out to be of some interest, and therefore a figure (Fig. 6) from *L. persimilis* WOLLASTON of the *isoplexidis* group is given for comparison.

A prerequisite of including *azoricus* in the *isoplexidis* group would be that the colour pattern is considered to be a taxonomically more important feature than the morphological differences together. In that case the ancestors of the Azorean species should be Macaronesian but the evolution would have been a fairly drastic example of punctuated equilibrium.

The possibility that *azoricus* might be a more recent introduction cannot be excluded but so far there seems to be no indication from where.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LITERATURE CITED

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1986. Contributo alla conoscenza della fauna delle Isole Canarie. Revisione delle specie del grupo *Longitarsus isoplexidis* con descrizione di due nuovi taxa (Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae, Alticinae). *Vieraea* 16: 351-360.

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