

BOOK REVIEW

NYLANDER, U. 2008. **Review of the genera *Calodema* and *Metaxymorpha* (Coleoptera: Buprestidae: Stigmoderini)**. Folia Heyrovskyana Supplementum 13, 84 pp., 306 color photographs; DVD appendix. ISSN 1801-7142; ISBN 978-80-86447-14-8. Kabourek Publishing, Zlín, Czech Republic, www.kabourek.cz; price: 790 CZK / 35 EUR (ca. US\$46). Order directly from the publisher or various on-line entomology and natural history book-sellers.

For buprestiphiles, nothing excites our nets or our imaginations any more than the Australasian stigmoderine genera *Calodema* Laporte and Gory, 1838 and *Metaxymorpha* Parry, 1848. These are moderate to large-sized beetles (ca. 25–75 mm), with most species sporting a combination of structural and pigmented color patterns of blues, greens, yellows and reds, found in tropical forest habitats in northeastern Australia and more widely on New Guinea (both Papua and the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya). Since 1993, these two genera have been the subject of a number of descriptive papers (e.g., Neef de Sainval and Lander 1993a, b, 1994), which, while expanding the size of both genera, left both somewhat confused and in need of a comprehensive revisionary accounting. It should be noted that several taxa described in that flurry of activity had the entire type series, and especially the holotypes, retained in the respective author's private collection(s) (e.g., Endo 1998) and these types were not available to Dr. Nylander for the purpose of this new revision. In an odd paradox of capitalism and environmentalism, specimens of some of these beetles are frequently listed for sale, some at very high prices (ca. 1,000–1,250 EUR), on various on-line auction and/or commercial insect dealer websites. With money to be made, further exploration by resident entomologists and their indigenous local colleagues continued to turn up new species. But lest this dissolve into an anti commercial-entomology rant, it may be argued that after bird-wing butterflies, Papuan species of these two buprestid genera are further responsible for the development of 'sustainable use' of some New Guinean rainforests, through the farming and sale of specimens via the Insect Farming and Trading Agency, Bulolo, PNG (www.ifta.com.pg). But back to the book - in a spirit of full disclosure, I must admit that in my role of English language editor for Folia Heyrovskyana, I did have ample opportunity to work with the original text (but not subsequent versions) of this volume and hope I was able to improve the text for author and reader alike. However, I had not seen the various color plates, photos, maps, etc. until I received a copy of the book. Even though it was not a complete surprise, I have to admit being very impressed with how it all turned out via the skill of the publisher in constructing the layout of the volume.

The Introduction discusses the two genera in context of their placement within the tribe Stigmoderini, a taxon that contains both Australasian and Neotropical genera. The systematics of *Calodema* is discussed and illustrated within pages 5 to 44 and color figures 1 to 145. The genus is separated into four species groups, which are diagnosed in the first of numerous pictorial keys, combining color figures and summary descriptors. Thereafter, each species-group taxon is discussed in a traditional presentation of synonymy, summary description, discussion, biology, flight period and distribution. Each species is amply illustrated with beautiful color figures and a color map showing specific vouchered localities rather than the inexact 'ranges' that some authors attempt to provide. With the fragmentation of rain forest in northeast New South Wales and eastern Queensland, specific collection events are better for maps than any supposed historical range. In *Calodema*, there are two new species described, one subspecies elevated and two subspecies proposed as new synonyms. The species of *Metaxymorpha* are similarly treated within pages 44 to 76 and color figures 146 to 292. This genus is separated into three species groups and the species are separated in a traditional dichotomous key. There are two new species of *Metaxymorpha* described. Both types of keys utilized in this work have the infrequently encountered bonus of a reference to the page number for each subsequently discussed taxon. As each genus has slowly grown through further exploration, as well as the location of new taxa in old collections, it would seem very probable to expect further new taxa as additionally remote parts of New Guinea continue to be accessed, either by collectors, insect dealers or worst of all, loggers and lumber exporters. Scientifically, most of the conclusions presented are supported by the data, but I suspect that the author may have been too

conservative in his consideration of the three 'populations' of *C. regalis*. Simply judging from the habitus figures, close-ups of elytral punctuation and apices and the distribution map showing the disjunct localities, I may have looked at these in a different way (*i.e.*, subspecies).

The printed volume concludes with a summary of biological information and figures 293 to 306, illustrating adults *in situ*, larvae presumed to be *C. ribbei* and infested host trees. The Acknowledgements come before the list of References, followed by two pages of color dorsal habitus figures serving as a pictorial index, before the concluding final page with a traditional Index. Included with the printed volume is a 12-min DVD entitled "Jewel beetles of the genera *Calodema* and *Metaxymorpha* in primary rainforests of Papua New Guinea and Australia." This DVD combines still and video photography and provides short glimpses of four species of *Calodema* and two species of *Metaxymorpha* feeding and crawling over leaves and flowers of their respective adult host plants. The introduction includes photographs of habitats and various local collectors of these big-bountied beetles. Background music, supposed to be Papuan percussion, and sounds of background water and birds makes this a unique and entertaining appendix to the printed volume. The A5 volume is hard-bound with good semi-gloss paper used, which prevents glare from the color figures. There are a few minor grammatical or spellings errors, but the author is Swedish so his English is slightly more imperfect than mine. The cost is very reasonable considering the length of the text, the many color figures and the DVD. If you like buprestids, or big beautiful beetles, this volume would be a very nice addition to many entomological libraries.

Literature Cited

- Endo, S. 1998.** A new species and a new subspecies of *Calodema* from Yapen I. near Irian Jaya (Indonesia) (Coleoptera: Buprestidae). *Jewel Beetles* 6:23–25.
- Neef de Sainval, T., and T. Lander. 1993a.** Iconographie des especes decrites des genres *Calodema* et *Metaxymorpha* (Coleoptera Buprestidae). *Bulletin de la Société Sciences Nat* 79:6–7.
- Neef de Sainval, T., and T. Lander. 1993b.** *Calodema* et *Metaxymorpha* nouveaux (Coleoptera Buprestidae). *Bulletin de la Société Sciences Nat* 79:7–8.
- Neef de Sainval, T., and T. Lander. 1994.** Iconographie des especes decrites des genres *Calodema* et *Metaxymorpha* (suite) (Coleoptera Buprestidae). *Bulletin de la Société Sciences Nat* 81:23–24.

C. L. Bellamy, *Plant Pest Diagnostics Center, California Department of Food & Agriculture, 3294 Meadowview Road, Sacramento, CA 95832, U.S.A., cbellamy@cdfa.ca.gov*

(Received 4 February 2009; accepted 4 February 2009. Publication date 24 June 2009.)