

ON THE IDENTITY OF *PLOCIOPTERUS VARIEGATUS* SHARP
(COLEOPTERA: STAPHYLINIDAE)

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Abstract

Nordus horni (Bernhauer) and *Plociopterus belti* Sharp are recognized for the first time as **junior subjective synonyms** of *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp. **Lectotypes** are here designated for *N. horni* and *P. variegatus*. The taxonomic history is given for the species.

During the course of a revision of the xanthopygine genus *Nordus* Blackwelder we encountered a series of taxonomic problems. The purpose of this paper is to present a case of synonymy between *Brachydirus horni* Bernhauer, *Plociopterus belti* Sharp, and *P. variegatus* Sharp.

Sharp (1884) described both species of *Plociopterus* discussed here in subsequent pages of the same publication. He described *P. belti* from a single female specimen, whereas the type series for *P. variegatus* includes 22 specimens, containing both males and females. We are certain that the specimen examined as the type of *P. belti* is indeed the type of *P. belti*; it has Sharp's handwriting on the specimen card.

Sharp stated in his descriptions that these two species were very similar and had only a few differences in color pattern. The two differences in the color pattern are exhibited by the coloration of the sixth and seventh abdominal tergum, and the coloration of the apical portion of the elytra. In most specimens of the type series of *P. variegatus*, the abdominal terga are orange except for the seventh and sixth terga, which are brown, and the elytra are metallic bluish-brown. There are a few specimens in the type series that have the sixth abdominal tergum brown only on the apical portion, and the elytra orange on the apical part. In the type of *P. belti*, the abdominal terga are dark orange and it is difficult to distinguish whether or not the sixth and seventh terga are brown. However, under close examination, the color pattern is identical with that of *P. variegatus*.

The structural differences mentioned by Sharp are the form of the eighth abdominal tergum and the length of the antennae. He stated that the tergum of the female is "more conspicuously produced and acuminate in the middle in *P. belti* [than in *P. variegatus*] and is foveate in front of the point" (Sharp 1884). We were unable to find any difference between the type specimens of both species, and thus we believe that Sharp's claim is invalid. Sharp also mentioned that the antennae are longer and more slender in *P. belti* than any other species of the genus, however, they are identical to the antennae of *P. variegatus*.

Bernhauer (1927) subsequently described the already established species of *P. variegatus* Sharp, as a new species of *Brachydirus*, calling it *Brachydirus horni*. Blackwelder (1952) realized that the name *Brachydirus* was preoccupied and proposed the new name *Nordus* for the genus. The first author of this paper has examined all type specimens of *Nordus* and compared the type specimens of *N. horni*, *P. belti*, and *P. variegatus*. The male genitalia are identical for the type specimens of *N. horni* and

P. variegatus. The color patterns of *N. horni* are identical with those of most specimens of *P. variegatus*. The only known specimens of *N. horni* are the lectotype in the Field Museum of Natural History, and the paralectotype in the Deutsche Entomologische Institut, and the only known specimen of *P. belti* is actually the holotype in the British Museum.

Below we provide the complete taxonomic history of the species, newly including the necessary synonyms and lectotype designations. Lectotype designations are justified under article 74.1.1 of the ICZN (1999) in order to fix the status of these specimens as the sole name-bearing type of these species and for the express purpose of nomenclatural stability.

Plociopterus variegatus Sharp

Plociopterus variegatus Sharp 1884:353 [description]; Bernhauer and Schubert 1914:406 [catalog]; Blackwelder 1944:142 [checklist]; Scheerpeltz 1960:121 [characters]; Herman 2001:3593 [catalog].

LECTOTYPE. (male, specimen in BMNH, labels as follow; **here designated**): Bugaba., 800–1,500 ft. Champion // B. C. A. Col. I. 2. *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp // LECTOTYPE *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp des. Chatzimanolis 2002.
 PARALECTOTYPES. (21 specimens in BMNH, labels as follow; **here designated**): five specimens (three male, two female) with labels: Bugaba, Panama. Champion // B. C. A. Col. I. 2. *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp // Sharp Coll. 1905 – 313 // PARALECTOTYPE *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp des. Chatzimanolis 2002. Eight specimens (six male, two female) with labels: Bugaba, 800–1,500 ft. Champion // B. C. A. Col. I. 2. *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp // PARALECTOTYPE *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp des. Chatzimanolis 2002. Five specimens (two male, three female) with labels: Bugaba, 800–1,500 ft. Champion // B. C. A. Col. I. 2. *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp // Sharp Coll. 1905 – 313 // PARALECTOTYPE *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp des. Chatzimanolis 2002. Three specimens (two male, one female) with labels: Type // Bugaba, Panama. Champion // B. C. A. Col. I. 2. *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp // Sharp Coll. 1905 – 313 // PARALECTOTYPE *Plociopterus variegatus* Sharp des. Chatzimanolis 2002.

Plociopterus belti Sharp 1884:354 [description]; Bernhauer and Schubert 1914:406 [catalog]; Blackwelder 1944:142 [checklist]; Scheerpeltz 1960:124 [characters]; Herman 2001:3591 [catalog]; **New synonym.**

HOLOTYPE. (female, specimen in BMNH, labels as follows): Type // Chontales. Nicaragua. T. Belt. // B. C. A. Col. I. 2. *Plociopterus belti* Sharp // Sharp Coll. 1905 – 313.

Brachydirus horni Bernhauer 1927:168 [description]; Scheerpeltz 1933:1416 [catalog]; Blackwelder 1944:141 [checklist]; Scheerpeltz 1971:95 [characters]; **New synonym.**

LECTOTYPE. (male, specimen in FMNH, labels as follow; **here designated**): Columbien, Magdalena, Thieme // *Brachydirus horni* Bern. Cotypus. M. gehr. // Chicago NHMuseum M. Bernhauer Collection // LECTOTYPE *Brachydirus horni* Bernhauer des. S. Chatzimanolis 2002.

PARALECTOTYPE. (female, specimen in DEI, labels as follow; **here designated**): Columbien, Magdalena, Thieme // Bernhauer det. // Syntypus // *Brachydirus horni* Bern. Typ. // Coll. Kraatz // coll. DEI Eberswalde // PARALECTOTYPE *Brachydirus horni* Bernhauer des. S. Chatzimanolis 2002.

Nordus horni (Bernhauer); Blackwelder 1952:262 [combination in *Nordus*]; Herman 2001:3580 [catalog].

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