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**A new species of *Sunius* CURTIS 1829
from the Haut Atlas, Morocco
(Coleoptera: Staphylinidae, Paederinae)**

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Abstract: *Sunius hastatus* sp. n. from the Haut Atlas, Morocco, is described, figured, and distinguished from similar congeners.

Key words: Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Paederinae, *Sunius*, Palaearctic region, Morocco, Haut Atlas, taxonomy, new species, endemism.

Introduction

According to COIFFAIT (1984), approximately 50 species of the genus *Sunius* CURTIS have become known from the Western Palaearctic region, seven of which have been recorded from Morocco. They include the widespread *S. propinquus* (BRISOUT), two species restricted to southern Spain and Morocco [*S. nitidus* (QUEDENFELDT) and *S. politus* (QUEDENFELDT)], one confined to the west of North Africa [*S. peyerimhoffi* (COIFFAIT)], and three species endemic in Moroccan mountain ranges: *S. montanellus* (BORDONI), *S. gourvesi* (COIFFAIT), and *S. atlasicus* (COIFFAIT).

Recently examined material from the collections of the Muséum d'histoire naturelle Genève (MHNG) contained yet another species from the Haut Atlas with highly distinctive male sexual characters, which is described below. As can be inferred from its external morphology and the circumstances of its collection, it is most likely an endemic of this mountain range.

***Sunius hastatus* sp. n. (Figs. 1-3, Map 1)**

Holotype ♂: HAUT-ATLAS Oukaimeden 2500 m 28-IV-60 C. BESUCHET / Holotypus ♂ *Sunius hastatus* sp. n. det. V. Assing 2001 (MHNG).

Paratypes: 2 ♀♀: same data as holotype (MHNG, cAss).

Description: Small species, 2.6 - 2.8 mm. Entire body uniformly testaceous.

Head oblong (length measured from anterior margin of clypeus to posterior margin of head), approximately 1.15 times as long as wide; postgenae in dorsal view weakly curved, almost straight, more or less subparallel; eyes very small, in dorsal view less than 1/5 the length of postgenae; puncturation moderately coarse and moderately dense, in median dorsal area sparse; microsculpture absent.

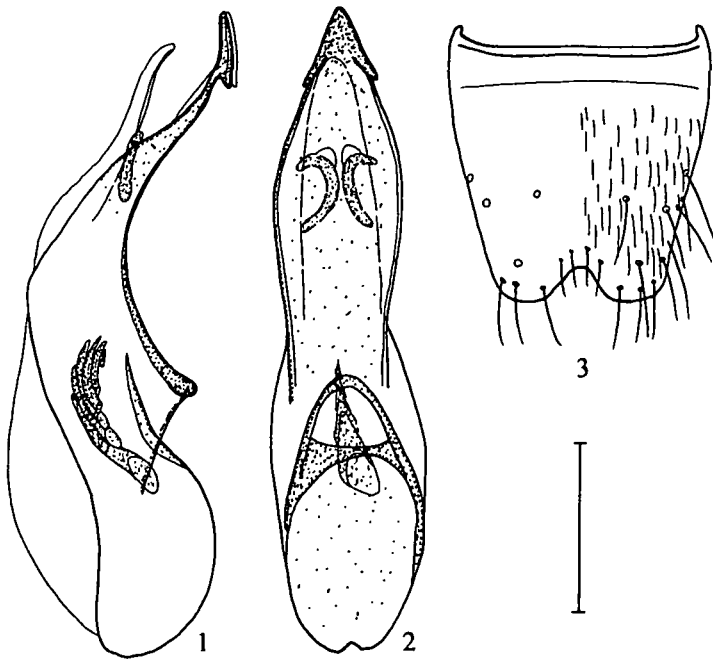
Pronotum small in relation to head and weakly oblong, approximately 0.9 times as wide

as head and 1.15 times as long as wide; puncturation approximately as coarse as that of lateral areas of head, but very dense, median line impunctate; microsculpture absent.

Elytra short and narrow, approximately as wide as pronotum, 0.9 times as wide as abdomen, and at suture 0.75 times as long as pronotum; with fine and ill-defined, partly slightly rugose puncturation; hind wings reduced.

Abdomen with very fine puncturation and with shallow microsculpture; tergum VII at posterior margin without palisade fringe.

♂: sternum VII unmodified; posterior margin of sternum VIII with moderately deep and not very acute emargination, pubescence unmodified (Fig. 3); aedeagus with long and in ventral view very slender ventral process, internal sac with row of sclerotized spines (Figs. 1-2).



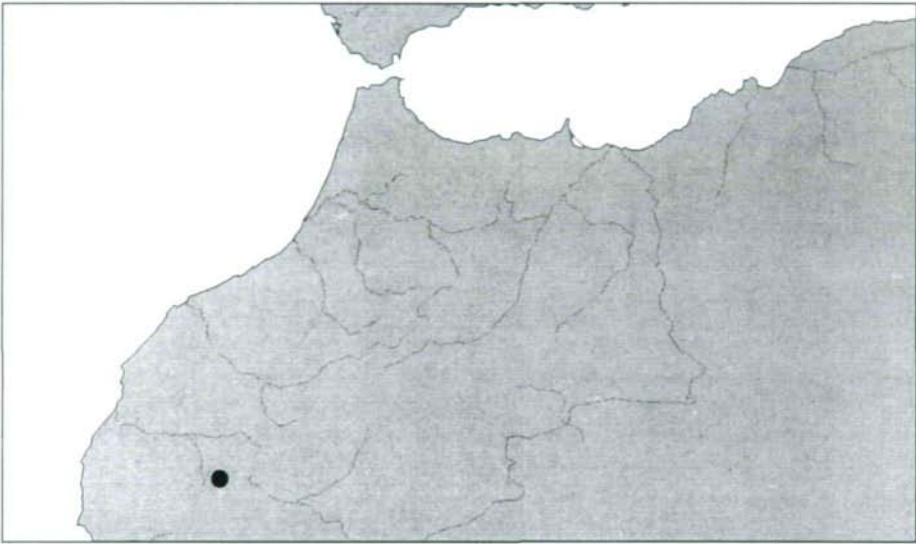
Figs. 1-3: *Sunius hastatus* sp. n.: 1, 2 – aedeagus in lateral and in ventral view; 3 – ♂ sternum VIII, pubescence of left half omitted. Scale: 1-2: 0.1 mm; 3: 0.2 mm.

Derivatio nominis: The name (Lat., adj.: armed with a spear) refers to the shape of the ventral process of the aedeagus.

Comparative notes: From all its Moroccan congeners, *S. hastatus* is readily distinguished by the highly distinctive morphology of the aedeagus and by the smaller eyes. In addition it is separated from *S. propinquus*, *S. nitidus*, and *S. politus* by smaller size and the absence of a palisade fringe at the posterior margin of the abdominal tergum VII, from *S. gourvesi* by an oblong head, and from *S. atlasicus* by an unmodified ♂ sternum VII.

Distribution: As can be inferred from the various adaptive reductions (of size,

pigmentation, eyes, wings, palisade fringe) and from the fact that it was collected at a relatively high altitude (2500m), *S. hastatus* is probably an endemic of the Moroccan Haut Atlas.



Map 1: Type locality of *Sunius hastatus* sp. n. in Morocco.

Zusammenfassung

Sunius hastatus sp. n. wird aus dem Hohen Atlas in Marokko beschrieben und von ähnlichen Arten unterschieden. Die primären und sekundären männlichen Sexualmerkmale werden abgebildet.

Reference

COIFFAIT H. (1984): Coléoptères Staphylinidae de la région paléarctique occidentale. V. Sous famille Paederinae Tribu Paederini 2, Sous famille Euaesthetinae. — *Nouv. Rev. Ent. Suppl.* 13 (4): 1-424.

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