

## A recent record of *Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775) in Zambia (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Scutelleridae)

## Ein rezenter Nachweis von *Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775) in Sambia (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Scutelleridae)

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### Abstract:

A record of an adult specimen of *Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775) in Zambia is reported. Additional information on the distribution and the ecology of this species is given.

### Zusammenfassung:

Es wird über einen Nachweis eines adulten Exemplars von *Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775) in Sambia berichtet. Ergänzende Informationen zur Verbreitung und Ökologie dieser Art werden gegeben.

**Key words:** *Sphaerocoris annulus*, Scutelleridae, Heteroptera, Hemiptera, distribution, ecology, Zambia.

### Introduction

The genus *Sphaerocoris* BURMEISTER, 1835 belongs to the family Scutelleridae within the suborder Heteroptera of the Hemiptera. Seventeen species within this genus have been described.

*Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775), commonly known as Picasso Bug or Zulu Hud Bug, is a medium-sized bug with a length of up to 15 mm. The colours and design of the pronotum and scutellum with sinuous and transversal markings and eleven areas with black outlines distributed in a 5-4-2 pattern serve as a warning to predators (POUTOULI et al. 2011).

*S. annulus* has been reported from Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo and Zimbabwe (LINNAVUORI 1986; MBONDJI MBONDJI & PLUOT-SIGWALT 2000; BAYLISS 2008; AGBOTON et al. 2014; BAYISA 2016; GBIF.ORG 2016; BIOLIB.CZ 2017; INATURALIST.ORG 2017). Although the species seems to be wide-spread in tropical Africa (LINNAVUORI 1986), only little specific information on it can be found on the internet.

*S. annulus* feeds on a variety of plants, e. g. *Gossypium* species, *Hibiscus* species and *Abelmoschus esculentus* (Malvaceae), *Coffea arabica* (Rubiaceae), *Citrus* species (Rutaceae), *Vernonia* species (Asteraceae), *Albizia* species (Fabaceae), *Capsicum annuum* and *Solanum vesbasifolium* (Solanaceae), *Hoslundia opposita* (Lamiaceae) as well as *Anacardium occidentale* (Anacardiaceae) and is considered a (minor) pest on cash crops (MBONDJI MBONDJI & PLUOT-SIGWALT 2000; POUTOULI et al. 2011; AGBOTON et al. 2014; BAYISA 2016; INATURALIST.ORG 2017).

The species is monovoltine and reproduces at the beginning of the dry season (November/December). The full development takes 56 days (MBONDJI MBONDJI & PLUOT-SIGWALT 2000; INATURALIST.ORG 2017).

### New record of *Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775)

On 14.05.2017, BARBARA BIGHIGNOLI was able to photograph an adult of *S. annulus* (Fig. 1). The specimen was found by her seven-year-old daughter GIORGIA TURINI outside their house on a small wall fence of the porch. The observation took place in Mongu, the capital of Western Province in Zambia, which is situated on a promontory on the eastern edge of the Barotse Floodplain of the Zambezi River (Fig. 2).

On 18.05.2017, BARBARA BIGHIGNOLI wrote that it has rained a lot this year and that the plain is still flooded, although it stopped raining at the beginning of April (personal communication).

It seems that *S. annulus* has not been reported from Zambia yet. So the record mentioned in

this paper might be the first one for this country.

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Fig. 1: *Sphaerocoris annulus* (FABRICIUS, 1775) (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Scutelleridae), Mongu, Western Province, Zambia, 14.05.2017.



Fig. 2: Location of the finding, Mongu, Western Province, Zambia, 01.01.2017. (Photographs: BARBARA BIGHIGNOLI.)

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