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Philonthus moldavicus WENDELER, 1924, a new synonym of *P. intermedius* (LACORDAIRE, 1835) (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae)

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Abstract

After examination of the holotype of *Philonthus moldavicus* WENDELER, 1924, this name is placed in synonymy with *P. intermedius* (LACORDAIRE, 1835). The species belongs to the monophyletic *rotundicollis* species group which is briefly discussed.

Key words: Insecta, Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylininae, Philonthina, *Philonthus*, *rotundicollis* group, new synonymy.

Philonthus intermedius (LACORDAIRE, 1835)

Staphylinus intermedius LACORDAIRE, 1835: 388.
Philonthus moldavicus WENDELER, 1924: 343, **syn.n.**
Philonthus intermedius: COIFFAIT 1974: 220.
(For complete references see HERMAN 2001).

Type material: *Philonthus moldavicus*: Holotype ♂: "♂ \ Rumänien, Moldau, ex E.A.Boettcher Bln. \ Ph. moldavicus n. sp. Wendeler det. \ Holotypus (red label) \ Philonthus moldavicus WDLR. = intermedius BOISD. & LAC. Det. M. Uhlig 1985 \ Philonthus ♂ intermedius (Lac.) Gusarov det. 1992" [Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin].

No types of *Staphylinus intermedius* were found in the museums which were expected to have Lacordaire's or Boisduval's types (Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris; Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, Bruxelles).

The original description of *P. moldavicus* is based on a unique male specimen from Moldavia. WENDELER (1924) placed this species close to *P. intermedius* and *P. laminatus* (CREUTZER, 1799). Since then no further records of *P. moldavicus* were published. COIFFAIT (1974: 130, 298) treated *P. moldavicus* under "incertae sedis" stating that *P. moldavicus* might represent "a local race of *P. intermedius* (p. 130, footnote) and HERMAN (2001) listed *P. moldavicus* as valid species. Those circumstances and the pending part of the *Philonthus* revision (SCHILLHAMMER 2003, in press) prompted the authors to study the holotype of *P. moldavicus* to find out whether it really is a distinct species.

The holotype of *P. moldavicus* is very similar (almost identical) to specimens of *P. intermedius* in external characters and the shape of aedeagus (for illustrations see SCHILLHAMMER 2003). Although there was no opportunity to study the types of *P. intermedius* we consider both names as synonyms, the concept of the latter species being generally accepted.

Distribution: *Philonthus intermedius* is a common European species distributed as far East as Kopet Dagh Mountains in Turkmenistan.

The *Philonthus rotundicollis* species group

The monophyletic *Philonthus rotundicollis* species group is based on a few very peculiar autapomorphies (SCHILLHAMMER 2003), the most conspicuous being the extended male sternite VI. Currently this strictly Palaearctic group comprises five described and a new species. At

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species level this is one of the most difficult groups because of the high variability and homogeneity in aedeagal characters. The problems are particularly apparent in the Caucasus and the Far East. The current concept of this species group is much narrower than the "group de *intermedius*" of COIFFAIT (1974).

List of described species included in the *P. rotundicollis* group (according to SCHILLHAMMER 2003):

P. laminatus (CREUTZER, 1799)
P. intermedius (LACORDAIRE, 1835) = *P. moldavicus* WENDELER, 1924
P. rotundicollis (MÉNÉTRIÉS, 1832)
P. picimanus (MÉNÉTRIÉS, 1832)
P. sinuatocollis MOTSCHULSKY, 1860
P. kiangsiensis BERNHAUER, 1933
P. sp.n. from China

For detailed descriptions and diagnoses (including that of the new species) as well as complete synonymy lists and discussions on various synonymies (particularly in case of *P. picimanus* and *P. sinuatocollis*) see SCHILLHAMMER (2003).

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