**Limnebius hieronymi**, a new species from Central Italy
(Coleoptera: Hydraenidae)

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Abstract

*Limnebius hieronymi* sp.n. (Coleoptera: Hydraenidae) is described from Pescasseroli, Abruzzo, Italy. The species belongs to the *L. nitidus* (Marshall) species group.

Key words: Coleoptera, Hydraenidae, *Limnebius*, taxonomy, new species, Europe.

Introduction


In the course of a survey of the water beetle fauna of the Abruzzi Mountains (Central Italy) a small series of an undescribed species of *Limnebius* was collected from the Fiume Sangro near Pescasseroli. The species can be readily recognized by the structure of the aedeagus. It is described below.

Acronyms:
cVU coll. O. Vorst, Utrecht
NMW Naturhistorisches Museum Wien
RMNH Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum Naturalis, Leiden

*Limnebius hieronymi* sp.n.

**TYPE MATERIAL:** Holotype ♂ (RMNH): “Italy: Abruzzo: Pescasseroli \ 25.V.2003, leg. O.Vorst \ UTM 33T UG996731506, Ab65L”, “Holotypus \ *Limnebius \ hieronymi* Vorst” [red]. **Paratypes:** 1 ♂, 1 ♀ (RMNH), 5 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀ (cVU), 1 ♂, 1 ♀ (NMW), same locality data as holotype.

**DIAGNOSIS:** 1.30–1.45 mm (males), 1.40–1.60 mm (females) long, 0.75–0.80 mm wide. Black to dark brown, with elytral and particularly pronotal side and hind margins paler. Head and pronotum with rather sparse and distinctive punctuation, smooth and glabrous between the punctures, pronotum with more or less distinctly developed shagreen towards the sides. Elytra with a more dense and finer punctuation, shagreened entirely. Legs, antennae and palpi testaceous. Elytral apices rounded, not truncate.

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Fig. 1: Type locality of *Limnebius hieronymi* sp.n., Fiume Sangro 2 km N of Pescasseroli.
VORST: *Limnebius hieronymi*, a new species from Central Italy (HYDRAENIDAE)

Aedeagus (Fig. 2) of a rather simple type. Main piece slender, flattened, not twisted, with a few subapical setae on left side. Left paramere short, flat and distinctly separate from the main piece, provided with a single row of ca. 10 setae, and a few apical setae. Pseudoparamere absent, but ventral pleat present. Flagellum clearly visible.

TYPE LOCALITY: The type series was collected along the borders of a small mountain stream, Fiume Sangro, 2 km N of Pescasseroli (UTM UG9969731506, Euro 50), which at this point is about three m wide and 40 cm deep, at 1,180 m above sea level. The stream is heavily shaded by a corridor of bushes (*Salix* sp.). The stream bed is formed by small stones and sand, the embankment shows a mosaic of pebbles, sand and more silty pockets, and is partly covered with grasses (Fig. 1). The accompanying hydraenid fauna includes *Limnebius papposus* MULSANT, eight species of *Hydraena* KUGELANN and one species of *Ochthebius* LEACH.

DISTRIBUTION: So far only known from the type locality: Fiume Sangro, Pescasseroli, Abruzzo, Italy.

ETYMOLOGY: Named after my friend Jeroen D. Fokker, who patiently accompanied me on many collecting trips; genitive case of Hieronymus, the Latin equivalent of Jeroen.

**Discussion**

Although several Mediterranean *Limnebius* species have been described in recent years, the discovery of an undescribed species from Italy, a country with a relatively well studied water beetle fauna, came as a surprise.

Based on the structure of the aedeagus and the absence of modifications of the male ventrite VI, *Limnebius hieronymi* should be placed in the *L. nitidus* (MARSHAM) group sensu JÄCH (1993). The overall aedeagal structure points to the *L. cordobanus* d’ORCHYMONT subgroup, of which however all but one of the known representatives are provided with a pseudoparamere.

Within the *L. cordobanus* subgroup *L. hieronymi* geographically links the two disjoint distribution areas of this subgroup, that in the west is represented by *L. bacchus* BALFOUR-BROWNE (S Spain), *L. cordobanus* d’ORCHYMONT (S Spain), *L. grandicollis* WOLLASTON (Madeira), *L. ibericus* BALFOUR-BROWNE (Portugal, NW Spain) and *L. minoricensis* (Balearic Islands) and in the east by *L. corfidius* d’ORCHYMONT (Turkey) and *L. corybus* d’ORCHYMONT...
(Greece, W and N Turkey) (Jäch 1993). None of the 16 species of Limnebius known to occur in mainland Italy (Audisio et al. 1995) seem to be closely related to L. hieronymi. The only other Italian representatives of the L. nitidus group are the common and widespread L. aluta Bedel and L. nitidus, which can be easily separated.

References


MARSHAM, T. 1802: Coleoptera Britannica, sistens Insecta Coleoptera Britanniceps indigena secundum methodum Linnaeanam disposita. – Londini: J. White, iii-xxxi, 548 pp., 30 pls.


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