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VIII. *Notes on the Species of Triplax of Stephens' "Illustrations" and Collection.* By G. R. WATERHOUSE, Esq., F.Z.S., &c.

[Read 3rd Dec. 1860.]

IN my own collection, and the collections of my friends, so far as I recollect, there are but two British species of *Triplax*, viz. *T. russica*, and *T. ænea*; but in Mr. Stephens', there are five species, and as with regard to some of these there is much confusion, I have thought the following notes would be acceptable.

Sp. 1. *Triplax russica* of Stephens' Illustrations, vol. iii. p. 88, sp. 1, and Collection.

The insect universally known by the same name.

Sp. 2. *Tr. castanea*, Steph. l. c., p. 89, 2.

Represented by three specimens in Mr. Stephens' Collection. One a very immature specimen of the *Triplax russica*: the other two are of the same species, but present scarcely any divergence from the normal condition of the insect. These are referred to the *Silpha castanea* of Marsh. Ent. Brit. p. 122, but Marsham described the insect from Shaw's Collection, and we have no reason to believe that either of the specimens above noticed was the original of the description: this latter gives the size of the insect as two lines, whilst *T. russica* is said, in the same work, to be 3 lines in length. I think it therefore very doubtful if the present insect be the Marshamian *S. castanea*.

Sp. 3. *Tr. ænea*, Steph. l. c., p. 89, and Collection — = *Tr. ænea*, Gyll., &c. &c. &c.

Sp. 4. *Tr. bicolor*, Steph. l. c., p. 89, pl. xvii. f. 4.

This is given as the *Silpha bicolor* of Marsham, Ent. Brit. 122, 18. A certain species inhabiting Sweden was referred by Gyllenhal (see Ins. Suec. i. p. 205, 2) to the *S. bicolor* of Marsham in 1808, since which time it has been well known on the continent by that name. The description given by Stephens is evidently taken from Gyllenhal, and hence belongs to the same insect, and yet to the best of my know-

IX. *Descriptions of Scymnus discoideus (Family Coccinellidæ) and two allied Species, and Description of a new Species of Bryaxis (Fam. Pselaphidæ). By G. R. WATERHOUSE, Esq., F.Z.S., &c.*

[Read March 4th, 1861.]

Scymnus discoideus, Illiger, Gyll., Mulsant, &c. ; *Byrrhus Pini* of Marsham.

Sc. ovatus, niger, pilosus; elytris crebre subtiliter punctatis, fulvo-rufis, sutura nigricante; corpore subtus fortius minus crebre punctato, pectore canaliculato; antennis, palpis, pedibusque plus minusve nigricantibus; thoracis angulis anterioribus plerumque rufescentibus.

Sc. discoideus is by nearly all authors said to be a pine-tree insect. I have just examined sixty specimens from various localities, all taken from pine-trees—of thirty-six specimens in my own collection, many are from the neighbourhood of Erith, and two dozen specimens which I examined from Dr. Power's collection are from Weybridge. The insect is said to be very variable in colour, &c., and both Gyllenhal and Mulsant have devoted considerable space in their works to the description of these varieties. Among the specimens above alluded to, however, and many others which I have beaten out of pine-trees, I have not met with such varieties; whilst, on the other hand, I have met with *Scymni* from other situations, which correspond very closely with the varieties above alluded to. The pine-tree insect, according to my experience, is black, with brick-red elytra; the suture of the elytra is more or less indistinctly, and *narrowly* edged with dusky, and not unfrequently the base of the elytra and the outer margin are narrowly edged with dusky or brownish, but in no case well defined, and, on the outer margin, the darker colour is confined to the fore-part of the elytron. The thorax is sometimes entirely black, but generally there is a trace of dull red at the sides, and more especially at the anterior angle. The abdomen also is usually tinted with rufous at the apex. The legs are sometimes black, with pitchy tarsi, but usually the coxæ, tibiæ and tarsi are more or less rufescent. The chest is always distinctly canalicu-

late, and the small, nearly semicircular plate situated immediately beneath the base of the posterior thigh, which Mulsant calls the "plaque abdominale," extends, in the fore-and-aft direction, over rather more than two-thirds of the diameter of the abdominal segment. The punctuation of the elytra is dense and rather fine, and composed of punctures of different sizes, and the interstices are somewhat rugulose.

Scymnus atriceps of Stephens is founded upon an immature specimen of this species.

Scymnus Mulsanti, n. sp.

Sc. ovatus, postice sub-acuminatus, niger, pilosus; elytris crebre punctatis, obscure rufis, late nigro-marginatis; corpore subtus crebre subtilius punctato; antennis, palpis, pedibusque testaceis.

Of this insect I possess nine specimens, collected from the roots of herbage, just above high water mark, about a mile beyond Southend; and I have a single specimen which I took at Holm-bush, in Sussex. In Dr. Power's collection are eleven specimens from the latter locality, two from Deal, and two from a marshy pit near Lee, in Kent. Its favourite resorts, then, would appear to be marshy places, either near the sea or inland; and it is found in localities far remote from fir-trees. The average size of the insect is rather less than that of the *Sc. discoideus*; it is rather more convex, and differs in having the elytra somewhat acuminate in the posterior half; in having the chest and abdomen very thickly (especially towards and at the sides) and more finely punctured; in having the abdominal plates more extended in the fore-and-aft direction, and consequently leaving a narrower space behind between the plate and the edge of the segment; in having the pectoral groove excessively indistinct or entirely wanting; and in having the antennæ, palpi and legs entirely testaceous, and the thighs shorter and more inflated. The red colour of the elytra, moreover, is usually darker, and the elytra are broadly margined with black throughout. Taking a common condition of the colouring, the black and the red are nearly in equal proportions: the black occupies a broad space at the base of the elytra, extends down the suture for a short distance in the form of an equally broad band; here (that is, about midway between the base and the apex of the elytra) it is very often rather suddenly expanded in width, and there is a corre-

sponding expansion of the black at the side of the elytron; but behind the centre the sutural band is considerably contracted before it reaches the apex, where again it dilates to join the black of the margin. Sometimes the sutural band is suddenly contracted a little behind the middle of the elytra, and completely disappears; and occasionally the dark colour is so diffused, that the red almost disappears. Among the various described varieties of *Sc. discoideus*, I do not see any which completely correspond with the present species in the colouring. I see none in which the black on the suture, for instance, is somewhat suddenly dilated in the middle, as is frequently the case in the *Sc. Mulsanti*.

Specimens of this insect stand in Stephens' collection to represent the "*Scymnus limbatus*, Kirby's MSS.," but the original description must be taken from some other insect, since in the "Illustrations" the legs are said to be "pitchy-black."

Scymnus limbatus, Kirby, MSS. and Collection; Steph. Illustr. iv. p. 395.

Sc. breviter ovatus, niger, pilosus; elytris fortius regulariter punctatis, obscure ferrugineis, sutura apiceque late, marginibus lateralibus anguste, nigro-marginatis; corpore subtus minus crebre punctato, pectore canaliculato; antennis, palpis, pedibusque nigricantibus.

Decidedly smaller, and of a more convex and shorter form than *Sc. discoideus*, from which it is further distinguished by the more distinct puncturing of the elytra—here the punctures are more widely separated and of equal size, and the intervening spaces are perfectly even (not rugulose); the elytra are less ample; the pubescence shorter; the abdominal plate is rather more extended towards the apex of the first abdominal segment, but its transverse diameter is less, and its curve is more sudden, showing a slight tendency to assume an angular form behind. From *Sc. Mulsanti* it may be distinguished by its shorter and obtusely rounded elytra, the more distinct and less dense punctuation of the elytra and under parts of the body, the decidedly smaller size of the abdominal plates, the distinct pectoral groove, and the black legs with the femora less inflated. The very broad black band which runs along the suture is usually pretty equal in width, and the apex of the elytra is pretty broadly margined, but the sides are very narrowly edged with black.

I possess four specimens of this insect; the locality of only one of them I have noted, and that was from the Hammersmith

marshes: in Dr. Power's collection I find six specimens, three of which are from the same locality, and the other three are from Hornsey Fen. In neither place are there any fir-trees.

Bryaxis simplex, n. sp.

Rufo-picea; elytris sanguineis, marginibus infuscatis; antennis pedibusque fusco-testaceis; capite tri-foveolato; thorace foveolis tribus sub-æqualibus.

This insect belongs to the same section as the *B. fossulata*: the foveæ on the thorax are nearly equal, and not united by a transverse groove; the abdomen presents no sexual distinctions, and the anterior coxæ are unarmed in the male—they are not even slightly produced, and angular as in *B. fossulata*; and the male is only distinguished by the presence of a very small spine at the apex of the intermediate tibiæ. In size it is equal to the *B. sanguinea*, and its antennæ are as long as in the female of that insect, and can scarcely be said to differ in structure. The general colour is piceous, not darker than in *B. fossulata*, but of a more rufous tint; the antennæ and legs are fusco-testaceous; the tibiæ and tarsi rather paler than the thighs; the elytra are red, but less intense and less brilliant than in *B. sanguinea*; and at the margins, throughout, they are more or less piceous. The head has a small foveola on the vertex, besides the three ordinary foveæ; of these, the two frontal foveæ are rather more approximated than in *B. fossulata*, and the hinder part of the head is more produced. The terminal joints of the palpi are fuscous or piceous; the basal joints paler. The thorax agrees very nearly in form with that of *B. fossulata*, but the posterior angles are less obtuse; the lateral foveæ are rather larger and less forward in position, and there is a shallow depression on each side, connected with these foveæ, which runs along the posterior margin of the thorax and extends almost to the central fovea; the space between this latter and the lateral fovea is much raised, and almost assumes the form of a large, bluntly-rounded tubercle; the surface of the thorax is very finely and sparingly punctured. The elytra are relatively longer than in *B. fossulata*, and, like the abdomen, more finely and more sparingly punctured, and the pubescence is more scant. The striolæ at the base of the first abdominal segment, above, are more widely separated, the space between them slightly exceeding one-third of the entire width of the convex part of the abdomen; whilst in *B. fossulata* the corresponding space is rather less than

one-third ; there is no evident difference in the sexes in this respect, as is seen in some other species.

The above description is founded upon six male specimens and two females, which I found under rejectamenta, by the River Medway, near Rochester, in February, 1857 ; the insect, then, may possibly be confined to situations within the influence of salt or brackish water.

X. *On the Euphorbia-infesting Coleoptera of the Canary Islands.* By T. VERNON WOLLASTON, Esq., M.A., F.L.S.

[Read 6th May, 1861.]

THERE are few facts in Entomology more extensively true, than that the most peculiar insects of a region are usually to be found either dependent on or inhabiting the same area as its most peculiar plants. Accepting this as an axiom, I have never failed to derive much practical aid, in every country which I have yet explored, from ascertaining in the first instance not merely the general character of the vegetation, but also the particular plants in which it is naturally most prolific, and the tracts where they occur ; for experience has invariably shown me that it is from such tracts that the entomologist will, in the long run, obtain his greatest treasures. I do not say that these regions must always be the most productive as regards the number of species ; far from it,—for they may often occupy high elevations, difficult of access, which the host of colonists gradually naturalized below has failed to reach ; but I think it is not too much to affirm, that the insect population of such localities is *par excellence* the truly indigenous one, and that consequently the tenants of these spots have a greater claim to be the *αὐτόχθονες* of the soil (and probably, therefore, to a great extent, endemic) than those of any other.

That the fact is universal, even despite the undoubted repulsiveness of certain plants to the generality of the insect tribes, there is good reason to suspect. Few trees, for instance, in their chemical properties, could be more unattractive, one would ima-