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A new species of *Microctenochira* SPAETH from Belize (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae: Cassidinae: Cassidini)

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ABSTRACT. *Microctenochira belizensis*, species new to science, is described from Belize. It belongs to the group of species with elytral pattern forming a regular black ring.

Key words: entomology, taxonomy, new species, Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae, Cassidinae, Cassidini, *Microctenochira*, Belize.

CHAPUIS (1875) proposed the genus *Ctenochira* for small Cassidinae with pectinate claws. WEISE (1896) designated *Coptocyclus aciculata* Boheman, 1855 as type species of *Ctenochira* CHAPUIS. SPAETH (1926) in his monograph of the genera from the New World with pectinate claws described within *Ctenochira* a new subgenus *Microctenochira* with *Coptocyclus jousseini* BOHEMAN, 1855 as type species. HINCKS (1950) noticed that the name *Ctenochira* CHAPUIS was preoccupied by *Ctenochira* FOERSTER, 1855 and he proposed a new name *Euctenochira* for cassidine genus. He overlooked that the name *Microctenochira* has priority and recently *Euctenochira* has usually been treated as subgenus of *Microctenochira* (SEENO and WILCOX 1982, RILEY 1986). In my world catalogue of Cassidinae I noted (BOROWIEC 1999) *Euctenochira* under synonyms of *Microctenochira* but without formal synonymization. In my opinion division of the genus into two subgenera is untimely and some species have characters crossed between both proposed subgenera. The genus *Microctenochira* is well characterized by structure of claws, appendiculate on fore legs and pectinate on mid and hind legs. SPAETH (1926) published a perfect key to the genus, but eight species were described after the date of publication of the key (SPAETH 1932; ŚWIĘTOJAŃSKA and BOROWIEC 1995, 1999; BOROWIEC 2002).

In material I borrowed from National Museum of Natural History, London I found a new species of the genus *Microtenochira* SPAETH collected in Belize. It belongs to the group of species with elytral pattern forming a regular black ring without distinct markings in central yellow spot.

Colour photos of all similar species are available in BOROWIEC and ŚWIĘTOJAŃSKA (2002).

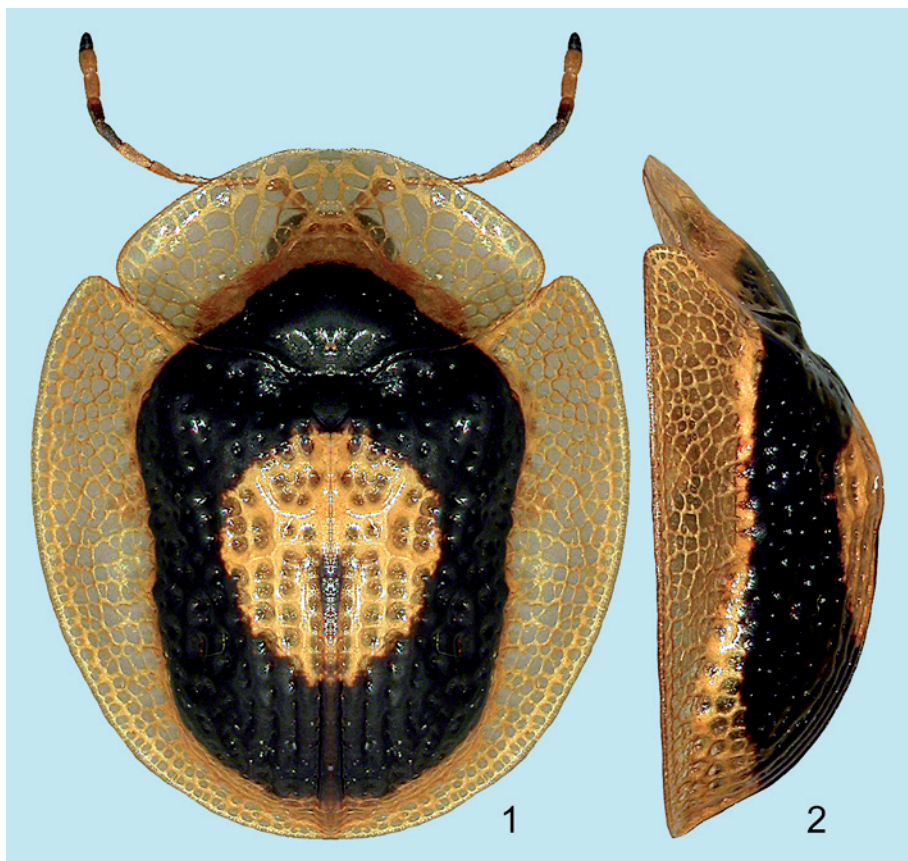
***Microtenochira belizensis* n. sp.**

ETYMOLOGY

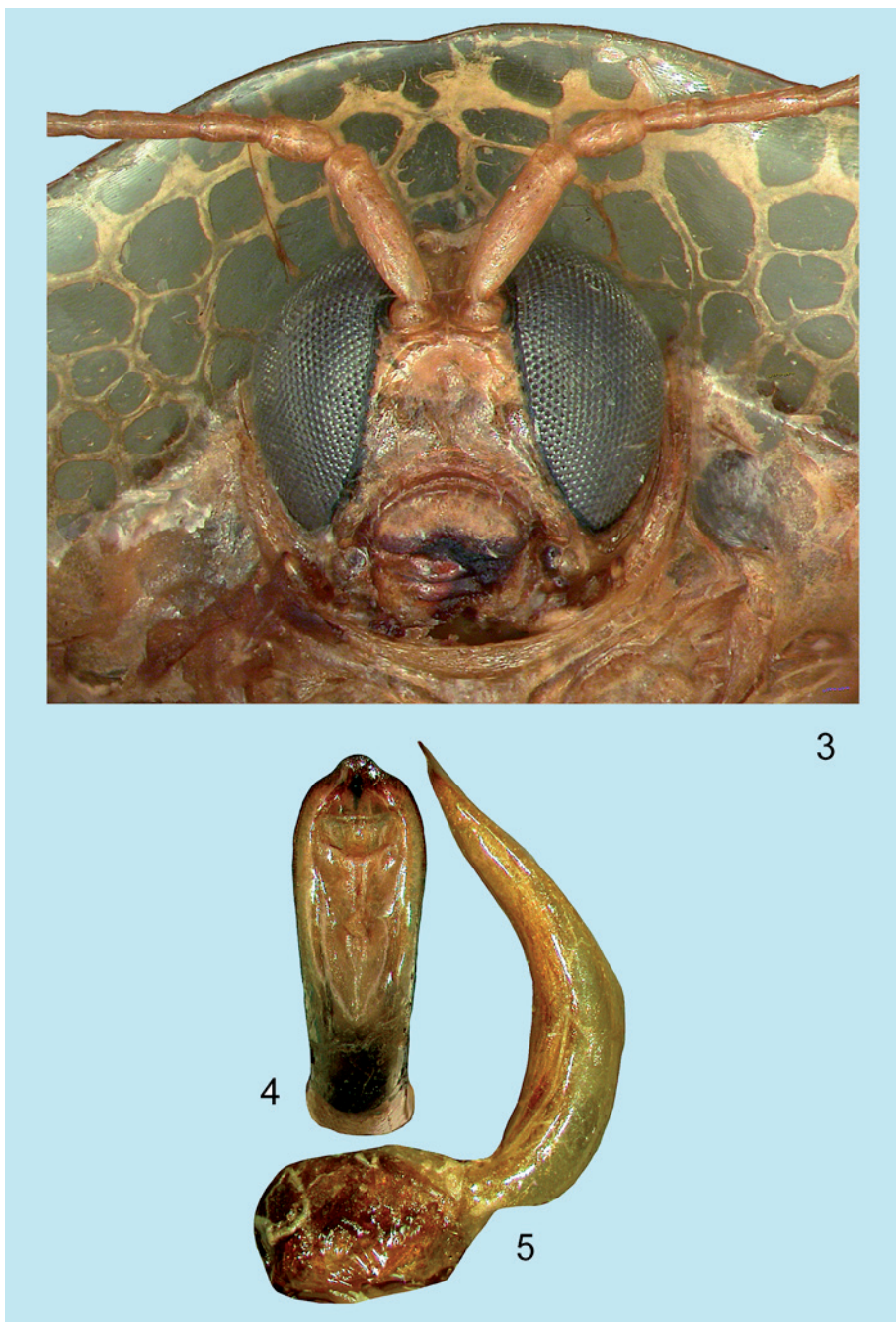
Named after its terra typica, Belize in northern part of Central America.

DIAGNOSIS

It belongs to the group of species with elongate antennae and flat or impressed clypeus. Eight species, including *M. belizensis*, form elytral pattern composed with



1, 2. *Microtenochira belizensis* n. sp.: 1 – habitus dorsal, 2 – habitus lateral



3-5. *Microctenochira belizensis* n. sp.: 3 – head, 4 – apex of penis dorsal, 5 – penis lateral

black ring and pale central spot without additional markings or with only small dark stripes of figures: *M. danielssoni* BOROWIEC, 1995, *M. libidinosa* (SPAETH, 1926), form of *M. lindigi* (KIRSCH, 1865) without central dark figure, *M. sanguinidorsis* (SPAETH, 1926), *M. sertata* (ERICHSON, 1847), *M. tabida* (BOHEMAN, 1855), and *M. vivida* (BOHEMAN, 1855). *M. belizensis* differs from all relatives in black scutellum while in other species, even where black ring is broad, scutellum is yellow to red. *M. sanguinidorsis* and *M. tabida* differ also in central spot yellowish-red to blood red. *M. danielssoni* and *M. lindigi* behind the top of disc have a black small spot or V-shaped figure always extending behind elevated sutural interval while in *M. belizensis* the black markings form only narrow, short stripe not extending behind border of elevated sutural interval. Pale form of *M. danielssoni* without black markings on central yellow spot differs in yellow scutellum. *M. lindigi* differs in central yellow spot irregular, with emarginate borders. *M. sertata* at first glance looks similar but differs in very short third antennal segment, almost twice shorter than segment 2, while in *M. belizensis* third segment is only slightly shorter than second segment. *M. vivida* looks the most similar but differs, except yellow scutellum, in yellow central spot slightly longer than in *M. belizensis* and black ring at least behind the middle extending to margin of disc, while in *M. belizensis* black ring extends mostly to submarginal row and only in the middle to upper margin of punctures of marginal row.

DESCRIPTION

Length 5.7-6.1 mm, width 4.9-5.1 mm, length of pronotum 2.1-2.2 mm, width of pronotum 3.5-3.75 mm, length/width ratio 1.16-1.20, width/length ratio of pronotum 1.67-1.70. Body almost circular (fig. 1).

Pronotum yellow, disc at base with large, black basal spot as a part of dorsal ring. Scutellum black. Elytral disc with broad black ring, only central spot, marginal interval and apex of slope yellow. Ring in mid length as wide as half width of central yellow spot. Central yellow spot almost circular, suture behind slightly elevated top of disc with short black stripe. Explanate margin yellow. Ventrites and legs uniformly yellow. Antennal segments 1-7 and 10 yellow, segment 8 dark brown, segment 9 black with yellowish apex, segment 11 in basal 2/3 length yellow and in apical 1/3 length black.

Pronotum moderately broad, 1.67 times as wide as long, widest in mid length. Anterior margin forming regular arch, sides narrowly rounded. Disc indistinctly bordered from explanate margin. Whole surface of pronotum smooth, shiny, explanate margin with honeycomb structure.

Scutellum triangular, without sulcus. Base of elytra distinctly wider than base of pronotum. Humeri rounded, moderately protruding anterad. Elytral disc distinctly, almost evenly convex only at top with slightly marked, sparsely punctate elevation (fig. 2). Puncturation of disc mostly regular, moderately coarse to coarse, punctures gradually coarser from sutural to lateral rows. Punctures in rows dense, distance between punctures smaller than puncture diameter. Intervals 1 and 2 slightly convex, 1.5-2.0 times as wide as rows, central and lateral intervals as wide as to narrower than rows, elevated interspaces form low folds and especially on sides of disc puncturation and surface of disc appears slightly irregular. On lateral parts of slope puncturation com-

posed of mixed coarse and distinctly smaller punctures, the small punctures group in slightly irregular sulci. Marginal row distinct with punctures distinctly coarser than on sides of disc. Marginal interval flat, distinct on whole length, as wide as first interval. Surface of intervals smooth and shiny. Explanate margin of elytra moderately broad, in widest part as wide as 1/3 width of disc, moderately declivous. Surface of the margin smooth, shiny, with honeycomb structure. Apex of elytral epipleura bare.

Clypeus moderately broad, approximately 1.35 times as wide as long. Clypeal lines short, visible only at base of clypeal plate (fig. 3). Clypeal plate impunctate in anterior half shallowly impressed, anterior margin narrowly elevated forming a regular arch. Labrum emarginate to 1/3 length. Antennae moderately long length ratio of antennal segments: 100:45:40:68:68:60:56:50:50:55:105. Segment 3 only slightly shorter than segment 2, segment 4 approximately 1.7 times as long as segment 3, segments 9 and 10 distinctly longer than wide. Prosternal collar short. Prosternal process typical for the genus *Microctenochira*, broad, constricted in the middle, apex distinctly expanded laterally, sides in the middle slightly elevated. Surface of prosternal process regular, smooth, shiny. Anterior claws with large basal tooth, mid and posterior claws pectinate, pecten short, the longest teeth of pecten not longer than width of claw at base.

Male genitalia not characteristic, aedeagus stout, in profile regularly curved, with distinct apical process (figs. 4, 5).

TYPE MATERIAL

Holotype: "BELIZE, June 1997, Chiquibul Forest Res., Las Cuevas field station, 88°59' W:16°44' N, 500-700 m, D. Inward" and "Malaise Trap, BMNH(E) 2005-78"; paratype: "MT 12, 14-17.V.96, Wk80" "Chiquibul Forest Res., Las Cuevas field station, 88°59' W:16°44' N, BMNH{E} 2005-78" (holotype preserved at the National Museum of Natural History, London, England, paratype at the Department of Biodiversity and Evolutionary Taxonomy, University of Wrocław, Poland).

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