



FIRST RECORD OF *MECINUS JANTHINIFORMIS* (COLEOPTERA: CURCULIONIDAE) FROM SLOVAKIA

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Abstract: *Mecinus janthiniformis* Toševski & Caldara, 2011 is for the first time reported from Slovakia. The species was collected in south-western Slovakia, Borská nížina lowland and Devínska Kobyla near Bratislava.

Key words: *Mecinus janthiniformis*, Coleoptera, Curculionidae, faunistics, Slovakia

INTRODUCTION

BENEDIKT (2010) reports nine confirmed species of the weevil genus *Mecinus* Germar, 1821 and one doubtful species *M. circulatus* (Marsham, 1802), which was recently confirmed from southern Slovakia (KOŠTÁL 2015). *M. janthiniformis* was described based on both molecular and morphologic characters from Macedonia and characterized as a cryptic species belonging to *M. janthinus*-group. In the original description, *Linaria dalmatica* (L.) Mill. ssp. *macedonica* (Griseb.) is reported as a host plant (TOŠEVSKI et. al. 2011). Later on, CALDARA & FOGATO (2013) pointed out moderate, but sufficient morphological differences between *M. janthiniformis* and *M. janthinus*, and reported the further host plant of *M. janthiniformis*, *L. genistifolia* (L.) Mill. Phylogenetic analysis of the genus including *M. janthinus*-group was given by CALDARA et al. (2013). CALDARA (2013) reports for *M. janthiniformis* following countries of distribution: Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Within the project of comparative weevil research conducted by the first author at three localities in Záhorie PLA and one in its surroundings, all three authors performed collecting of Curculionoidea in years 2014 – 2017. The collecting site of *M. janthiniformis* is located in relatively small tree-free area in alluvial forests near Morava River nearby Gajary (Fig. 1) and is reported as “Gajary – env., 147 m a. s. l., N 48°28'19" E 16°53'35"”.



Fig. 1. Collecting site of *Mecinus janthiniformis* near Gajary, Slovakia (autumn aspect).

The locality can be characterized as mostly semi-wet Carex-meadow, however, with strongly gradated microbiotopes according to their humidity varying from semi-wet meadow to xerothermophilous microbiotopes. The remarkable hydro-gradient at this places determines also large vegetation diversity, for instance with two *Linaria* species, namely *L. vulgaris* Mill. and *L. genistifolia* (L.) Mill. at the locality or nearby. The material collected was examined using stereomicroscope (Intraco Micro NSZ-810) and *M. janthiniformis* was photographed by high resolution camera (Canon EOS 50D) and macro zoom lens (Canon MP-E 65 mm). Body lengths are without rostrum.

Abbreviations: PLA – Protected Landscape Area

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mecinus janthiniformis Toševski & Caldara, 2011 (Fig. 2) – material examined: Gajary env., 23.vi.2017 Data: “SLOVAKIA occ. Borská nížina, Gajary env., 23. vi. 2017, 1 ♀, 3.83 mm long, leg. et coll. Báborská, det. Koštál”, “[same place], 25. vi. 2017, 1 ♂, 4.16 mm long, leg. et coll. Koštál, det. Caldara”. Both specimens were swept in dry part of the locality during the period when *Linaria* spp. were before flowering.

Due to the courtesy of S. Benedikt, another unpublished recent data confirming the presence of *M. janthiniformis* in Slovakia were given to our disposal: “Slovakia mer. occ., Devínska Nová Ves env. (7767), Devínska Kobyla NNR, 19.V.2016, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, S. Benedikt coll., det. Caldara”. Both specimens were ex *L. genistifolia* (Benedikt, pers. comm.).

M. janthiniformis morphologically differs from *M. janthinus* by subtle, but according to CALDARA & FOGATO (2013) sufficient enough to distinguish “almost all museum specimens”. Main differentiating morphological characters of *M. janthiniformis* from *M. janthinus* are: “body generally larger (length 3.2–6.0 mm); apical part of the rostrum in female in lateral view more curved; punctures of pronotum slightly smaller, more densely adpressed; scales of elytral interstriae denser, arranged in two rows on part of several interstriae. Body of penis with sides slightly more abruptly narrowed in subapical part, towards apex ending in form of subtruncate tip” (CALDARA & FOGATO 2013).

The problem with morphological differentiating of sympatric cryptic species are often small series, unisexual material collected, unidentified host plant and/or considerable variability of local population. These facts were communicated between the last author and J. Krátký and/or I. Toševski. In any case, the study of cryptic species as *M. janthiniformis* will deserve further molecular and bionomic study, especially as differences among populations of particular species concerns.



Fig. 2. *Mecinus janthiniformis* ♂, not to scale.

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