ON THE IDENTITY OF PLISTONAX ALBOLIMITUS
(BATES, 1861)
(COLEOPTERA LAMIIIDAE) 1

by
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For many years I have been curious about the identity of a southern Brazilian lamiiid invariably labeled in collections as Plistonax albolutus (Bates, 1861). Bates (2, p. 471) described the species from Ega, in the Upper Amazon region. This same species was later described by Thomson (6, p. 19), without any locality reference, under the name multispinatus, as the type species of his monotypic genus Plistonax. Lacordaire (2, p. 747, note 1) was the first to suggest their identity. Both descriptions are omission as to the existence of white squamose ceraae on the legs, a peculiarity that would hardly be overlooked if they had occurred. Bates mentions the elytral surface covered with punctures, each having a greyish-white scale, but the legs are simply mentioned as clothed with thin ashly pile. Thomson gives a very short description of the species and refers to the legs as simply “brunnei”.

Recently, just before returning to Brazil from the United States, I had the opportunity of identifying three male specimens, belonging to the Carnegie Museum, as the true albolutus. They are labeled as from Brazil, Para, July (Carnegie Museum Acc. No. 296), and conform with both Bates’s and Thomson’s descriptions, the legs being uniformly clothed with fine pile, without any white scales.

The southern Brazilian species, described below, is quite different, although closely related, and has the legs speckled with white scales.

Plistonax inopinatus, sp. n.

Male. Tegumen on head, prothorax and underside blackish; elsewhere light reddish chestnut; clothed with a general fulvous-brown pubescence; head, prothorax, scape of antennae, and legs

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with intermixed, scattered white stiff scaly setae; scape with two dorsal dark spots; second segment with one; segments 3-4 with two rings; close to base and apex, the basal ring wider; following segments each with a single ring closer to apex; inner side of segments from two with some white pubescence at base and tip, disappearing towards distal segments; elytra with a very irregular, comminute, large dorsal white patch, reaching anteriorly to posterior area of basal ridges, narrowing backwards to apical slope, and somewhat broadening again on slope, without reaching apices; on anterior portion of patch, along suture, with some light brown blotches; with a postmedian dark, “T”-shaped design on each elytron; marginal area of elytra, except base and apex, with some irregular white patches; punctures of elytra each with an imbedded white stiff seta; underside of body greyish white, except last abdominal segment, reddish, and a dark brown lateral patch on first abdominal segment; legs fulvous brown, with scattered stiff squamose setae; with pre-apical dorsal dark spots on femora, and two rings on tibiae, removed from base or apex; tarsi with base of segments two and three, and a narrow basal portion on distal segment, dark brown; lateral fringe of anterior tarsi black.

Head with a transverse frons, with isolated punctures, somewhat deep and mostly agglomerated on central area; with a series of punctures between upper eye lobes; antennal tubercles short, blunt, widely separated; eyes with a somewhat quadrate lower lobe, slightly wider than long; upper lobes rather distant on vertex; genae blunt, the length subequal to lower eye lobe. Antennae slightly longer than body length; the scape reaching about the middle of pronotum; second and other segments long, about one-third length of scape; third segment about one and one-third length of scape, and fourth only slightly longer than scape; following segments up to tenth gradually decreasing in length, the eleventh subequal to ninth segment.

Prothorax transverse, with two blunt robust, longitudinal tubercles, one on each side of pronotum, and a middle keel-like elevation, blunt at center and nearly reaching anterior margin of pronotum; lateral tubercles robust, conical, blunt; the surface around the tubercles strongly and deeply punctured, with a more regular line of punctures along the anterior and the posterior margins. Scutellum oblique, narrowing to and slightly bilobed at apex.

Elytra convex, about three and a half times length of pronotum; narrowing moderately towards and rounded to apex; apices only slightly and narrowly truncate, unarmcd; humeri salient, rounded; basal ridges salient and shallowly tuberculate at base, weakly so on crest; at beginning inwardly curved, then narrowing towards suture as a low, rather indistinct carina to beyond middle of elytra; areas between ridges and externally somewhat flatish; sides declivous, towards apex convex; surface densely punctured throughout, the punctures isolated, each with an imbedded white scaly seta.

Prosternal process arched, narrow at base, widened to about a half diameter of coxa, and sharply expanded distally at each side, closing coxal cavities, the distal margin sinuate; mesosternal process wider, the width nearly equal to diameter of coxa, slightly narrowed towards apex, at which it is slightly expanded and bilobed; fifth abdominal segment equal in length to fourth and one-half of third segment, gradually narrowed to apex and truncate at distal margin, the corners of truncature rounded.
Legs with stout, clubbed femora, the intermediate and posterior pairs narrow at base; tibiae slightly widened towards apex; tarsi nearly as long as tibiae, with the first segment about equal to segments two and three taken together, and subequal to distal segment; anterior tarsi broad, fringed with long, silky, black hairs; intermediate and posterior pairs rather narrow, especially first segment.

Female. Diverges from the male in its shorter tarsi, visibly shorter than tibiae; the first tarsal segment shorter than 2:3 taken together, and somewhat shorter than distal segment; anterior tarsi not much wider than intermediate and posterior tarsi, and not fringed with long hairs; the fifth abdominal segment more robust and convex, subequal in length to the three preceding segments taken together, with a median basal sulcus, and more rounded at apex; antennae only slightly shorter than in the male.

Variations: As can be expected, whenever a series of specimens is examined, this species shows a certain degree of variation. The
punctuation between the upper eye lobes, which in the holotype forms quite a symmetrical pattern, and is separated from the frontal punctuation by an impunctate area between antennal tubercles, is irregular in other specimens and can be connected without interruption with the frontal punctuation, which is also denser or sparser, or somewhat agglomerated in central area in some specimens. The tegumen can be of a darker or lighter shade, and the colour pattern can vary to a certain degree. The distribution of the white on dorsum and lateral areas of elytra is somewhat more restricted in some specimens, and more dispersed in others; the lateral and dorsal white, fluted in most specimens, can be separate in others. With the exception of the dark, blackish Y-shaped markings of elytra, which are more or less uniform, the other dark markings vary from darker to paler brown, as well as in size and shape, some of them being rather inconspicuous in some specimens.

Length, 10-17 mm., humeral width, 4-7 mm.

**Type Locality:** Brazil, State of Santa Catarina, Corupá (Hansa Humboldt); also occurs in Timbó, Blumenau, and Rio Natal, in the same State of Santa Catarina. Found from October to March.

**Holotype,** male, allotype, and one male paratype, in the collections of the American Museum of Natural History, New York; two paratypes, male and female, in the David Rockefeller Collection, New York; two paratypes, male and female, from the H. Zellibor assembly, and another four paratypes, three males and one female, in the Carlos Alberto Campos Seabra collection, Rio de Janeiro; four paratypes, two males and two females, in the collections of the Department of Zoology (Agriculture), São Paulo. All these specimens are from Corupá, and all are Anton Müller material distributed to various sources. The David Rockefeller paratypes as well as the allotype, belonged formerly to the Lionel Lacey collection. Besides these, a male and a female paratype, from Timbó, a male paratype from Rio Natal, and a female paratype from Blumenau, are in Mr. Ricardo von Diringshofen's collection, São Paulo; two paratypes, male and female, from Timbó, in the Department of Zoology (Agricultura) collection, São Paulo.

This species has a wider geographical distribution, and ranges as far north as Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo, but I have restricted the selection of type-specimens to the Santa Catarina area, owing to the present scarcity of specimens from elsewhere.

Although albomitius and inopinatus are of an obvious close affinity, there are a number of characters by which they can be easily separated.

**Plistonax albomitius** (Bates, 1861) has a more densely pockuated frons; the pronotum shows two rather wide, longitudinal, dark vittae, covering most of the dorsal surface of the large pronotal tubercles, which are also more stoutly spread out longitudinally; the head, antennae, prothorax, and legs, are destitute of stiff white scaly hairs dispersed through the clothing; the white markings of elytra are limited to dorsal surface; the dark, blackish postmedianelyrral vitta is inwardly curved, and connected to lateral margins by a zig-zag dark line (the Para specimens of the Carnegie Museum show an external thick expansion which is homologous to the external branch of the "Y" in inopinatus); the base of the mesosomal pro-
cess is bituberculate. This last character is only one of degree, for
*inopinatus* also shows a somewhat obsolete bituberculation at base
of mesosternal process.

*Pistonax inopinatus*, sp. n., has an unicolorous pronotum; the
head, antennae, prothorax, and legs show white stiff scaly hairs
interspersed among the clothing; the white elytral marking is more
extensive and extended to lateral areas; the post-median streak of
elytra is \textquoteleft{}Y\textquoteright\textquoteright{}-shapped and disconnected with margins; the wavy or
zig-zag posterior marking is nearly inconspicuous.

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