

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

Name Rectification and Comparisons between *Nephaspis cocois* Gordon and *Stethorus minutalus* Gordon & Chapin (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae)

LÚCIA M ALMEIDA, CIBELE S RIBEIRO-COSTA

Lab de Sistemática e Bioecologia de Coleoptera (Insecta), Depto de Zoologia, Univ Federal do Paraná, CP 19020, 81531-980, Curitiba, PR, Brasil; CNPq fellowship holders; lalmeida@ufpr.br; stra@ufpr.br

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ABSTRACT - This note has the purpose to rectify the identification of *Stethorus minutalus* Gordon & Chapin as a predator of *Bemisia tabaci* Gennadius (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae), for its correct name, *Nephaspis cocois* Gordon in a recent published paper. Similarities and differences between these two species are presented to avoid future misidentifications.

KEY WORDS: Identification, morphology, taxonomy

The purpose of this note is to rectify a misidentification of a species published in Silva & Bonani (2008), which reported a new record of a coccinellid feeding on eggs and nymphs of the whitefly *Bemisia tabaci* Gennadius biotype B (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae). The name *Stethorus minutalus* Gordon & Chapin needs to be corrected to *Nephaspis cocois* Gordon. Also, in the title and abstract, the subgenus *Stethorus* was misspelled as “*Stehtorus*” and “*Stethotrus*” although, recently, the subgenus was considered at genus level (Ślipiński 2007).

After these corrections, the geographical distribution of *N. cocois*, which was only known to Recife, Pernambuco (Gordon 1972) was extended to Piracicaba, São Paulo. *Nephaspis* Casey belongs to Scymninae (Coccinellidae) and comprises 43 species (Gordon 1996) distributed in Nearctic and Neotropical regions. *Stethorus* Weise belongs to the same subfamily and comprises 62 species (Gordon & Chapin 1983, Ślipiński 2007), but it has a worldwide distribution.

Nephaspis cocois is similar to *Stethorus minutalus* due to certain external characters and genitalia pattern. They have the same size (less than 2 mm); integument black colored with dense pubescence; antennae with 11 segments; abdomen with six sternites; male genitalia with median lobe shorter than parameres, which are slender and with a few setae on the apex.

These two species differ from each other mainly by the position of the head and mouthparts; shape of the antennae and postcoxal line. *Nephaspis cocois* has the head with mouthparts directed posteroventrally in a resting position, concealing the prosternum; antennae with enlarged basal segment and postcoxal line incomplete. *Stethorus minutalus* has the prosternum produced anteriorly to partly concealed mouthparts; basal antennal segment not strongly enlarged and postcoxal line complete.

In this way, it will be possible to separate these two species of Scymninae that share some similar characters,

avoiding future misidentifications with species of potential economic importance.

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