
SCIENTIFIC NOTE

TWO OBSERVATIONS OF ASSASSIN BUGS (HEMIPTERA: REDUVIIDAE) FEASTING ON ADULT JEWEL BEETLES (COLEOPTERA: BUPRESTIDAE), WITH NOTES ON ADULTS OF OTHER BUPRESTID SPECIES AND THEIR PREDATORS

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The impetus for this note began when two of us (JRN and RLW) were collecting on 5 October 2009 at 6 km SW Cacaloxtepec, Oaxaca, Mexico (17.699028°, −97.761139°; elevation 1,706 m), where JRN photographed an assassin bug, Apiomerus cf. longispinis Champion, feeding upon a jewel beetle, Hippomelas saginatus (Mannerheim) (Fig. 1), on Acacia bilimekii J.F. MacBr. (tehuixtle) (Fabaceae) (bit.ly/1KGZReZ). No other individuals of the beetle were seen on that tree species, but several were collected on nearby Acacia cochliacantha Willd. According to Nelson and Bellamy (1996), the size range for H. saginatus is 13.5–25.5 mm (average 21 mm) in length, based on 38 specimens. It is widespread in southern Mexico (Nelson and Bellamy 1996). Champion (1899) gave a range of 15.5–19.5 mm for A. longispinis, based on 14 specimens. That species occurs from the southwestern USA to Central America (bit.ly/1OSeXNp).

The third author (EJ) photographed an assassin bug, Rhynocoris annulatus (Linnaeus), feeding on a buprestid, Trachypterus picta decostigma (Fabricius) (Fig. 2; bit.ly/1MEHMv1), on the trunk of Populus alba L. (Salicaceae) in a heavily disturbed, lowland riparian Populus-Salix forest along the Danube River near Rusovce, Slovakia (48.057029°, 17.164679°; elevation 135 m), 9 June 2004. This species of buprestid ranges 9–15 mm long (Cobos 1987) and is widespread and common on Populus spp. in lowland forests of Europe, extending to Turkey and North Africa (Sakalian 2003). The predator species ranges 11–15 mm long (Putshkov 2002) and is Euro-Siberian in distribution (Aukema et al. 2013).

Searching on the Internet for images of Buprestidae being preyed upon by Reduviidae, we found one of a nymph of Reduvius personatus Linnaeus that apparently was feeding on an emerging Latipalpis plana (Olivier) (bit.ly/1itQ7Zc). It was at an online forum (bit.ly/1VT1y97), and no other detail was provided. We have been unable to locate any other images of a reduviid preying upon a buprestid, except these we present. However, we found mention in the literature: Hawkeswood (1990) observed Pristhesancus plagipennis Walker feeding on Castiarina octospilota (Gory and Laporte), and later he (1992) observed the same reduviid species preying on Castiarina cupida (Kerremans), both near Brisbane, Australia.

That adult Buprestidae are fed upon by generalist predators comes as no surprise. A stink bug, Podisus maculiventris (Say) (Pentatomidae), was found in Ottawa, Canada and photographed by EJ feeding on an adult emerald ash borer, Agrilus planipennis Fairmaire, an invasive buprestid (bugguide.net/node/view/1174907 and 1174908). Most reports of predation on adult emerald ash borer involve robber flies (Asilidae). Lavigne (2003) listed 31 species of predators as preying on at least 25 species of Buprestidae. Although spiders must often catch Buprestidae, we found little mention of them,