Beetles (Coleoptera) of Peru: A Survey of the Families.
Chrysomelidae: Alticinae (Flea Beetles)

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Diversity in Peru: 84 genera, 370 species.

Classification: Flea beetles (Alticinae in this work) are regarded by some as a tribe of Galerucinae (Alticini) based on lack of larval differences and some molecular evidence (see review in Hua et al., 2014). One significant problem with available phylogenetic datasets is the small taxon sampling relative to the group’s extraordinary diversity (estimated 10,000 species and over 600 genera); we are far from reasonable estimates of the true phylogeny. The present work treats flea beetles as a subfamily, i.e., Alticinae (following Furth and Suzuki, 1994; Furth and Suzuki, 1998; Mohamedsaid and Furth, 2011). The Galerucinae (sensu stricto) are treated separately in the Beetles of Peru series (Chaboo and Clark, 2015).

Recognition: Flea beetles are recognized by their enlarged hind femora (metafemora) that contain a metafemoral spring (Furth, 1980; Furth, 1982; Furth, 1988; Furth and Suzuki, 1998).

Habitat: The larvae are rather poorly known, but the majority of those that are known are root-feeding; some are also foliar-feeders (e.g., Altica, Blepharida, some Disonycha, Macrohaltica). Larvae and adults are usually on the same host plants. Most species are oligophagous, with the species in most genera feeding on related plant families, presumably because of the secondary chemical compounds that often serve as feeding attractants or stimulants for adults. Adult feeding damage on host leaves appears like many tiny round holes on the leaf surface (“shot gun pattern”).

The following is a list of species based solely on the literature, especially using Heikertinger and Csiki (1939, 1940), Blackwelder (1946), Bechyné and Bechyné (1971a/unpubl.), and Alata (1973). Seeino and Wilcox (1982) is a good reference for genera, as well as Nadein (2012–2014) (http://www.zin.ru/Animalia/Coleoptera/rus/alticinw.htm). Some of the species in this checklist are endemic to Peru; however, the distribution of the species is so poorly known at this point that it would not be reliable to indicate these now. According to Seeino and Wilcox (1982), only two genera (Conococha Bechyné, Eugoniola Csiki) are known from Peru. A “?” after a species name indicates that there is some question about the report of the species or about it being found in Peru. The genus Aphthona (in the true sense) does not exist in the Western Hemisphere; therefore, the species listed in the present checklist from Peru need to be transferred to other related genera as was pointed out in Furth and Savini (1996) and as was done for Mexican Aphthona in Furth (2006).

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