
A REVIEW OF THE GENUS CHAERODES (=CHOERODES) WHITE (COLEOPTERA: TENEBRIONIDAE: PHALERIINAE)

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ABSTRACT

The correct spelling of the genus is Chaerodes (not Choerodes auct.). There are two species of Chaerodes, known only from New Zealand: C. trachyscelides White (with C. concolor Sharp and C. fuscatus Broun as synonyms) and C. laetus Broun. A key and figures to separate them are presented.

Watt’s interest in the New Zealand tenebrionid fauna and Triplehorn’s studies of Phaleria and related genera have led to similar conclusions regarding a genus of beetles confined to New Zealand. We have pooled the information gained in studying large series of these beetles and a critical examination of type specimens.

SPELLING OF THE GENERIC NAME

In the Coleopterorum Catalogus, Gebien (1910) listed the name of this genus as Choerodes White 1846. He used the same spelling in his Katalog der Tenebrioniden (1939). Reference to White’s (1846) paper shows that White himself intended the name of the genus to be spelled Chaerodes. In the text, page 12, the name is given as Chaerodes at the head of both the genus and species descriptions. In Table 2, it is given once as Choerodes. In Table 1, Helaeotrechus (spelled thus twice in the text) is engraved as Heloetrechus. Apparently the "oe" diphthong was an idiosyncracy of the engraver. White himself clearly intended the spelling to be Chaerodes (and Helaeotrechus).

Lacordaire (1859:287) and Broun (1895:241) correctly spelled the name Chaerodes. Since Gebien’s catalogs have such a great influence on studies in Tenebrionidae, we feel that this brief review is warranted.

SYNONYMY

The genus Chaerodes White was based on C. trachyscelides which is the type of the genus by monotypy. Three additional species were assigned to the genus: C. concolor Sharp 1878, C. laetus Broun 1880 and C. fuscatus Broun 1895. All are from New Zealand.

Our studies indicate that there are only two valid species of Chaerodes: C.

*laetus* and *C. trachyscelides*, with *C. concolor* and *C. fusculus* as synonyms of the latter. They may be separated by the following key:

**Key to the Species of Chaerodes**

Interstices between pronotal punctures convex, surface dull; labrum densely and irregularly covered with stout bristles; outer emargination of front tibia deep; aedeagus stout, with asymmetrical flap-like process on underside of apicale near apex (Fig. 1); size larger, 6.5–8.6 mm in length; Northland to Stewart Island.............................. *trachyscelides* White

Interstices between pronotal punctures flat, surface shining; labrum with single transverse row of bristles; outer emargination of front tibia shallow; aedeagus more slender, without flap-like process on apicale (Fig. 2); size smaller, 4.5–5.5 mm in length; Northland, Auckland, Coromandel .................................................. *laetus* Broun

*Chaerodes trachyscelides* is extremely variable in color as shown by Harris (1988). Such variation has led to a great proliferation of names in the related genus *Phaleria* as demonstrated by Triplehorn and Watrous (1979, 1980) and Watrous and Triplehorn (1982). We have examined large series from various localities and have studied the type specimens [all in British Museum (Natural History)] of the synonyms indicated above and are not able to discern any difference among them of specific value.

**Types**

*Chaerodes trachyscelides* White, Lectotype ♀ (7.4 × 4.6 mm) bearing the following labels: New Zealand / 47 22 (on top and bottom respectively of circular, blue tinted label) / Type (printed in red circle) / Chaerodes (White) trachyscelides White, Zool. Ereb. and Terror. p. 12. t2 f1 2 (white, on blue tinted paper) / LECTOTYPE ♀, Chaerodes trachyscelides White, det. J. C. Watt, 1985. 3 paralectotypes ♀♀ with same data as lectotype also examined.

*Chaerodes concolor* Sharp, Lectotype ♂ (7.4 × 4.5 mm) bearing the following labels: Type D. S., Otago, Hutton (Sharp on card) / Type (printed in red circle) Sharp Coll. 1905-313 (printed) / LECTOTYPE ♂ Chaerodes concolor Sharp
(=trachyscelides White) det. J. C. Watt, 1985. Paralectotypes (5 δ♀, 5 ♀♀) with identical data also examined.

*Chaerodes fuscatus* Broun, Lectotype δ (not measured) bearing the following labels: Taranaki / Chaerodes fuscatus (Broun) / New Zealand, Broun Coll. Brit. Mus. 1922-482 (printed) / LECTOTYPE δ, Chaerodes fuscatus Broun (=trachyscelides) det. J. C. Watt, 1985. Paralectotypes: 2 ♀♀ with same Broun number and locality as lectotype in BMNH; δ, ♀ in NZAC [published as being from Manukau Harbor and New Plymouth].

*Chaerodes laetus* Broun, Lectotype ♀ (5.3 × 3.0 mm) bearing the following labels: Lectotype ♀: 648 (printed on green paper) / New Zealand, Broun Coll., Brit. Mus. 1922-482 (printed) / Tairua, Auckland / Chaerodes laetus (Broun) / LECTOTYPE ♀, Chaerodes laetus Broun, det. J. C. Watt, 1985.

**LITERATURE CITED**


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