

Occurrence of an Anophthalmic Trechine Beetle in Close Proximity to a Solfatara Field

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It is well known at present that anophthalmic trechine beetles can develop on recent volcanoes (cf. UÉNO, 1995), but their occurrence has been confirmed only in lava caves lying at low elevations. Nothing has been known about dispersal of their ancestors into deserted areas, and process of their colonization in lava caves has been open for speculation. Even recent progress of studies on the upper hypogean fauna is helpless in clarifying it. Recently, however, an unexpected discovery was made by Yoshinori KANEKO on the Hakoné Volcanoes, which may give a clue for pursuing the subject.

While looking for beetles in a gully running down the northern side of the Ôwaki-dani, the best known solfatara field on the Hakoné Volcanoes, he happened to find out two specimens of an anophthalmic *Trechiana* from beneath lava blocks embedded in the ground. The collecting site is only 400 m removed from active fumaroles and only 130 m down the slope, and the eruption is considered to have taken place about 3,000 years ago. It is difficult to elucidate how and when the trechine reached and colonized there, but anyway this is the first sound proof that even such an eyeless beetle can disperse to near the solfatara field lying near the top of a volcano.

These specimens were immediately submitted to me for taxonomic study, and were found identical in external morphology with *Trechiana pallidior* S. UÉNO (1981, p. 127, figs. 3, 9-10) described from an abandoned mine adit lying at the eastern foot of the Hakoné Volcanoes, 7.7 km distant to the east by south from the gully and about 130 m above sea-level. They are darker in coloration than the toptotypical specimens, and lose the left proximal teeth-patch inside the aedeagal inner sac, which is already very small and loose in the toptotypical specimens. However, these minor differences can be regarded as infraspecific variation. Their collecting data are as follows:

2 ♂♂, Kamiyu, 900 m alt., Hakoné-machi, Kanagawa Pref., 9-VI-1996, Y. KANEKO leg. (coll. NSMT).

In closing this brief report, I wish to thank Mr. Yoshinori KANEKO, who kindly placed his important findings at my disposal for study.

References

- UÉNO, S.-I., 1981. *Trechiana tamaensis* (Coleoptera, Trechinae) and its close relatives. *Mem. natn. Sci. Mus., Tokyo*, (14): 117-132.
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