

A Note on *Philonthus nigrita* (GRAVENHORST, 1806) (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylininae, Staphylinini, Philonthina)

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In the last issue of *Elytra* (n. ser.), 6 (1): 135–136 our colleague HAYASHI reported *Philonthus nigrita* (GRAVENHORST, 1806) from Japan, based on specimens collected in Osaka, Hyôgo, Nagano and Tokyo Prefectures. A color habitus picture of one specimen of the species, and of the aedoeagus, was attached to the note.

During my stay in my native country, the Czechoslovakia at that time, the genus *Philonthus* was one of my preferred study objects. I believe I had a good knowledge of the west Palaearctic species of the genus, I even wrote a key to the Central European species of the genus (SMETANA, 1959: 140) and I collected many specimens of *Philonthus nigrita*. All this said here just to give the reader of this note the background it is based on.

I am very sorry to say that the species declared by HAYASHI as *Philonthus nigrita* is definitely not that species. As the name *nigrita* (one who is black) itself suggests, the bearer of the name must be black and, indeed, the body and pubescence of *P. nigrita* is entirely black and the antennae and legs are also black, except for somewhat paler tarsi (Fig. 1). This is in sharp discrepancy with the color habitus of the species in HAYASHI's note that depicts a species with predominantly pale appendages, with elytra showing distinct greenish metallic luster, and



Fig. 1. Dorsal habitus of *Philonthus nigrita*
(GRAVENHORST, 1806)

with the pubescence of elytra and abdomen pale brown. The only thing *P. nigrita* and the illustrated species have in common is that they both belong to the same species-group, the *Nigrita*-group (COIFFAIT, 1967: 385; SMETANA, 1995: 372). Unfortunately, I am not able to say with certainty what species the illustrated specimen belongs to, but *Philonthus cunctator* SHARP, 1889 seems to come quite close. SHARP (1889: 41) himself compared *P. cunctator* to the European *P. fumarius* (GRAVENHORST, 1806) which is the close congener of *P. nigrita*.

To conclude, *P. nigrita* is a widely distributed Palearctic species, from western Europe, including Great Britain, through Caucasus, Central Asia and western Siberia to eastern Siberia, but it does not occur in Japan. Records from Japan by HAYASHI (2016: 135) are based on misidentification and are to be disregarded.

Acknowledgment

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