

## A revision of *Othiini* XXII. A new species, a new synonymy, and additional records of *Othius* from Northwest Georgia (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Staphylininae)

With 15 figures and 3 maps

VOLKER ASSING<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gabelsbergerstraße 2, 30163 Hannover, Germany. – vassing.hann@t-online.de

Published on 2021–12–31

DOI: 10.21248/contrib.entomol.71.2.237-245

### Abstract

A total of 373 specimens of *Othius* STEPHENS, 1829 was collected during three field trips to West Georgia conducted in June, July/August, and October 2021. The material is represented by eight species. One of them is described and illustrated: *Othius egriscus* spec. nov. (Georgia: Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti), a representative of the *O. crassus* group. The following synonymy is proposed: *Othius hebes* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998 = *O. fastigatus* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998, syn. nov. Two species are recorded for the first time since their respective original descriptions. The distributions of several species endemic in Northwest Georgia are clarified and mapped. The Georgian *Othius* fauna is currently represented by 16 described species, eleven of them endemic, and the genus as whole currently includes 136 species and subspecies.

### Taxonomic acts

*Othius egriscus* spec. nov. – urn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:CD95C9DB-D170-4435-AA1B-43DE3338D0BC

### Key words

Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylininae, *Othiini*, *Othius*, taxonomy, new species, new synonymy, Caucasus region, Georgia, new records, distribution maps

### Zusammenfassung

Insgesamt 373 Individuen der Gattung *Othius* STEPHENS, 1829 wurden während dreier Forschungsreisen nach West-Georgien im Juni, Juli/August und Oktober 2021 gesammelt. Eine der insgesamt acht Arten wird beschrieben und abgebildet: *Othius egriscus* spec. nov. (Georgia: Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti) aus der *O. crassus*-Gruppe. Ein Name wird synonymisiert: *Othius hebes* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998 = *O. fastigatus* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998, syn. nov. Zwei Arten werden erstmals seit ihrer Originalbeschreibung nachgewiesen. Die bislang unklaren Verbreitungsgebiete einiger in Nordwest-Georgien endemischer Arten werden geklärt und anhand von Karten illustriert. Die *Othius*-Fauna Georgiens umfasst derzeit 16 beschriebene Arten, elf davon endemisch. Die Gattung insgesamt enthält gegenwärtig 136 Arten und Unterarten.

## Schlüsselwörter

Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylininae, Othiini, *Othius*, Taxonomie, neue Arten, neue Synonymie, Kaukasusregion, Georgien, neue Nachweise, Verbreitungskarten

## Introduction

The genus *Othius* STEPHENS, 1829 has an essentially Palaearctic distribution. The genus was fully revised in the late 1990s (ASSING 1997a, b, 1998, 1999, ASSING & WUNDERLE 1995), with numerous subsequent supplements. Prior to the present study, it included 136 species and subspecies (ASSING 2019). In the West Palaearctic, the diversity and endemism hotspots are Madeira, the Canary Islands, and the Caucasus region. While new species are continuously being described from the East Palaearctic, the same does not apply to the West Palaearctic. No new taxa had been discovered for nearly two decades until very recently three new species were recorded and described from Georgia (ASSING 2019).

According to a recent review (ASSING 2019), the *Othius* fauna of Georgia was previously represented by 16 described species, three of them widespread in the West Palaearctic, two widespread Caucasian species, and the remainder micropterous and locally or regionally endemic. The majority of the endemic species was described more than two decades ago, so that the descriptions were based mostly on historical material without specified localities. As a consequence, the distributions of these species were largely unclear. While some of these distributions have been clarified in the meantime, others still remained uncertain. This is particularly true of the species of North Georgia, i.e., the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus. All the described endemic species are distributed in West Georgia eastwards approximately to the Rikoti (= Suram) pass, with one of the species ranging eastwards to Mtskheta-Mtianeti. However, unidentified females have been collected as far east as the north of Kakheti. For more details, also regarding species group assignments, see ASSING (2019).

Three field trips conducted to West Georgia in 2021, one by Volker Brachat (Geretsried) and Heinrich Meybohm (Großhansdorf) in June and two by Michael Schülke (Berlin) and the author in July/August and October, yielded a total of 373 specimens of *Othius* belonging to eight species (two widespread and six endemics), one of them undescribed. This material also revealed a new synonymy and significantly contributed to an understanding of the distribution patterns of *Othius* species in Northwest Georgia.

## Material and methods

The material examined in the present study is deposited in the following collections:

MNB Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin (including coll. Schülke)

cAss author's private collection

The morphological studies were conducted using Stemi SV 11 and Discovery V12 microscopes (Zeiss), as well as a Jenalab compound microscope (Carl Zeiss Jena). The images were created using digital cameras (Axio-cam ERc 5s, Nikon Coolpix 990), and Labscope and Picolay stacking software. The maps were created using MapCreator 2.0 (primap) software.

The measurements in the descriptions are given in mm and abbreviated as follows: EL: length of elytra from apex of scutellum to elytral hind margin; FL: length of fore-body from mandibles to the posterior margin of elytra; HL: head length from anterior margin of frons to posterior constriction; HW: maximal head width (across and including eyes); ML: length of median lobe of aedeagus; PL: length of pronotum along midline; PW: maximal width of pronotum; TaL: length of metatarsus (claws not included); TiL: length of metatibia (external aspect); TL: body length from apex of mandibles to posterior margin of tergite VIII.

The “parameral” side of the aedeagus (i.e., the side where the sperm duct enters) is referred to as the ventral, the opposite side as the dorsal aspect.

## Results

### *Othius grandis* HOCHHUTH, 1849

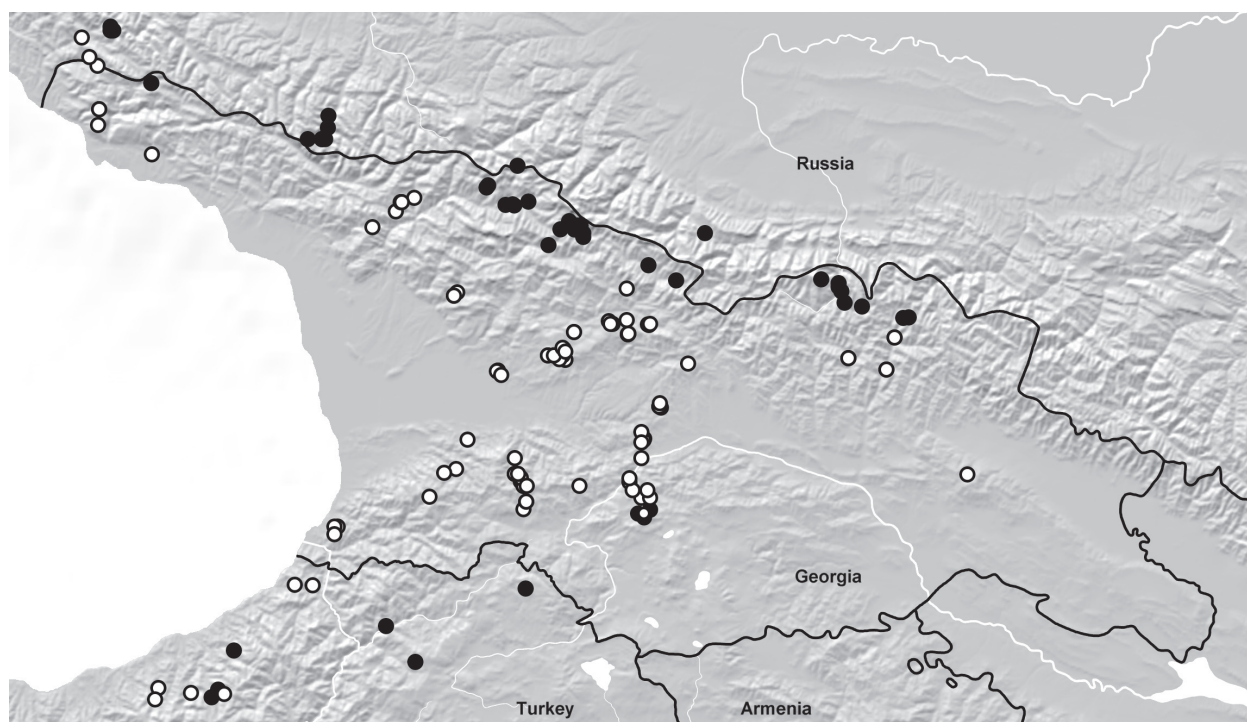
**Material examined: Georgia: Racha:** 1 ♂, 1 ex., NE Oni, Shovi, 42°41'47"N, 43°41'05"E, 1580 m, forest margin with predominant *Carpinus*, litter and roots sifted, 25.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ex., NE Oni, W Glola, 42°41'47"N, 43°35'04"E, 1140 m, mixed forest margin, litter sifted, 25.VII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB); 1 ♂, N Oni, E Ghebi, 42°45'54"N, 43°31'36"E, 1450 m, moist deciduous forest with predominant old *Fagus*, litter sifted, 22.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 1 ♀, 1 ex., mountain road E Ambrolauri, 42°31'42"N, 43°17'54"E, 1120 m, stream valley, litter sifted, 27.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ex., E Ambrolauri, 42°34'17"N, 43°21'22"E, 750 m, ruderal stream valley, litter sifted, 23.VII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB); 2 ♀♀, NE Ambrolauri, Likheti, 42°35'31"N, 43°13'38"E, 760 m, moist deciduous forest with predominant alder, scree and gravel

substrate, soil-washing, 21.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss). **Kvemo Svaneti**: 1 ♀, 1 ex., E Lentekhi, mountain track Chvelpi–Latpari pass, 42°50'25"N, 42°56'38"E, 1560 m, beech and hazelnut litter sifted, 29.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss); 1 ex., E Lentekhi, mountain track Chvelpi–Latpari pass, 42°50'30"N, 42°56'33"E, 1600 m, beech forest, litter and dead wood sifted, 30.VII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB); 1 ♀, Chvelpi–Latpari pass, 42°50'58"N, 42°56'42"E, 1950 m, beech forest, litter sifted, 15.VI.2021, leg. Brachat & Meybohm (cAss); 1 ♂, Ghebi, 42°45'09"N, 43°32'11"E, 1310 m, floodplain forest with alder, litter sifted, 18.VI.2021, leg. Brachat & Meybohm (cAss); 1 ♂, E Ushguli, E Zagari pass, 42°54'18"N, 43°08'32"E, 1860 m, moist *Carpinus* forest, litter sifted, 31.VII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss).

*Othius grandis* is widespread in the Caucasus region sensu lato. For a recent distribution map see ASSING (2019).

*Acer*, and *Salix* litter sifted, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 12 ♂♂, 12 ♀♀, 8 exs., E Ushguli, E Zagari pass, 42°54'18"N, 43°08'32"E, 1860 m, moist *Carpinus* forest, litter sifted, 31.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♂, 2 ♀♀, Chvelpi–Latpari pass, 42°51'19"N, 42°56'38"E, 2100 m, litter of birch, hazelnut, sorbus, and rhododendron, litter sifted, 15.VI.2021, leg. Brachat & Meybohm (cAss); 2 exs., E Lentekhi, mountain track Chvelpi–Latpari pass, 42°51'28"N, 42°56'42"E, 2200 m, montane *Betula* and *Acer* forest with rhododendron undergrowth, litter sifted, 30.VII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB). **Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti**: 1 ♂, S Mestia, 43°01'09"N, 42°42'19"E, 1860 m, secondary mixed forest, litter under hazelnut and undergrowth sifted, 8.VIII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss).

Like *O. grandis*, *O. stenocephalus* is widespread in the Caucasus region sensu lato. For a distribution map see ASSING (2019).



Map 1: Distributions of *Othius stenocephalus* (black circles) and micropterous endemic species (white circles; records of all species pooled).

*Othius stenocephalus* EPPELSHEIM, 1881

(Map 1)

**Material examined: Georgia: Racha:** 7 ♂♂, 6 ♀♀, 3 exs., NE Oni, Shovi, 42°41'47"N, 43°41'05"E, 1580 m, forest margin with predominant *Carpinus*, litter and roots sifted, 25.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 2 ♀♀, N Oni, E Ghebi, 42°45'54"N, 43°31'36"E, 1450 m, moist deciduous forest with predominant old *Fagus*, litter sifted, 22.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss). **Kvemo Svaneti:** 6 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, 6 exs., E Ushguli, E Zagari pass, 42°55'39"N, 43°06'56"E, 2330 m, *Salix* litter sifted, 31.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♂, 1 ♀, 1 ex., E Ushguli, E Zagari pass, 42°55'18"N, 43°07'55"E, 2240 m, 31.VII.2021, *Betula*,

This species is primarily found at higher elevations; the material previously examined from Georgia was collected at altitudes of 1580–2600 m. Remarkably, *O. stenocephalus* was never found together with micropterous congeners, although these have also been found in montane habitats (Map 1). This observation suggests that *O. stenocephalus* may be outcompeted by flightless *Othius* species of similar body size. Evidence of competitive exclusion of widespread by endemic species as been observed also for other species pairs, e.g., *Othius lapidicola* MÄRKEL & KIESENWETTER, 1858 by *O. crassus* MOTSCHULSKY, 1858 and *O. subuliformis* STEPHENS, 1833 by *O. brevipennis* KRAATZ, 1857 in the eastern Alps, and *O. subuliformis* by *O. wunderlei* ASSING, 1997 in South Spain (ASSING 2003).

*Othius hebes* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998

(Map 2)

*Othius hebes* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998: 299 ff.*Othius fastigatus* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998: 301 ff.;  
syn. nov.

**Material examined: Georgia: Racha:** 2 ♂♂, 1 ♀ [partly teneral], SE Oni, Lesora, 42°30'50"N, 43°31'37"E, 1440 m, graveyard with old trees, predominantly *Fagus*, litter sifted, 24.VII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 1 ♂, 1 ♀ [teneral], SE Oni, Lesora, 42°30'54"N, 43°31'13"E, 1360 m, deciduous forest with predominant *Carpinus*, litter sifted, 24.VII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB); 1 ♀ [teneral], SW Ambrolauri, N Nakerala pass, 42°24'41"N, 43°02'28"E, 1160 m, clearing in beech forest, beech litter at forest margin sifted, 26.VII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 2 ♀♀ [1 teneral], N Nakerala pass, 42°24'31"N, 43°02'27"E, 1160 m, beech forest margin, litter sifted, 26.VII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 1 ♂, mountain road E Ambrolauri, 42°31'04"N, 43°19'10"E, 1530 m, deep valley with *Carpinus* and *Acer*, litter sifted, 27.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 4 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, same data, but 20.X.2021 (cAss); 2 ♂♂, same data, but 28.X.2021 (cAss, MNB); 5 ♂♂, 4 ♀♀, mountain road E Ambrolauri, 42°31'42"N, 43°17'54"E, 1120 m, stream valley, litter sifted, 27.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 4 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀ mountain road E Ambrolauri, 42°31'06"N, 43°18'26"E, 1350 m, ditch with small trees and bushes, litter sifted, 28.X.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 7 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀, new pass road S Oni, 42°28'31"N, 43°24'31"E, 1810 m, montane forest (*Corylus*, *Acer*) margin, litter sifted, 28.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♂, 1 ♀, new pass road S Oni, 42°28'27"N, 43°24'23"E, 1810 m, moist montane forest with predominant hazelnut, litter sifted, 24.VII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB). **Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti:** 2 ♂♂, 6 ♀♀, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'54"N, 42°24'28"E, 580 m, track margin with predominant alder and hazelnut, litter sifted, 13.VIII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 3 ♀♀, same data, but forest with large rocks and with predominant hazelnut and alder, soil-washing (cAss); 5 ♂♂, 8 ♀♀, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'54"N, 42°24'28"E, 580 m, track margin with predominant alder and hazelnut, litter sifted, 16.X.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♀, same data, but soil-washing (cAss); 1 ♂, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'51"N, 42°24'20"E, 540 m, deciduous forest with rocks, litter sifted, 17.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 1 ♂, same data, but soil-washing (cAss); 4 ♂♂, 4 ♀♀, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°38'46"N, 42°25'40"E, 840 m, stream valley with deciduous forest, litter sifted, 17.X.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB). **Imereti:** 1 ♂, 2 ♀♀, pass 25 km SE Sachkhere, 42°10'05"N, 43°35'12"E, 1120 m, secondary beech forest, litter sifted, 23.X.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♂, 2 ♀♀, pass 25 km SE Sachkhere, 42°09'54"N, 43°35'44"E, 1190 m,

deciduous forest with predominant *Fagus* and *Carpinus*, litter sifted, 23.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 6 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, NW Surami, Rikoti pass, 42°03'40"N, 43°28'59"E, 930 m, stream valley with chestnut and alder, chestnut litter sifted, 24.X.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♀, same data, but soil-washing, leg. Assing (cAss); 2 ♀♀, 6 km W Surami, 42°01'34"N, 43°29'49"E, 940 m, margin of *Fagus* and *Carpinus* forest, litter sifted, 24.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 2 ♀♀, 8 km SW Surami, 42°01'33"N, 43°29'43"E, 960 m, 14.V.2016, leg. Brachat & Meybohm (cAss).

**Comment:** The original description of *O. hebes* is based on old type material mostly without specified localities ("Kaukas.", "Armen. Geb.", "Meskisches Geb.", "Suram", "Helenendorf", etc.) (ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV 1998). The locality "Helenendorf" (= Göygöl) in Azerbaijan is most likely erroneous, not only because other records from Azerbaijan or from the adjacent Armenia are unknown, but also because material from "Helenendorf" is known to have been mislabeled (ASSING & SCHÜLKE 2017). Subsequent records, again most of them old and without specified localities, were reported by ASSING (1999b, 2005). Other subsequent records (ASSING 2015, 2018) were partly based on misidentification (ASSING 2019).

*Othius fastigatus* was originally described based on old type material from "Svanetien" (ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV 1998) and subsequently reported also from the Nakerala pass and its environs (ASSING 2019).

According to ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV (1998), *O. fastigatus* is distinguished from *O. hebes* primarily by differently shaped hemitergites IX and by a slightly larger aedeagus with a ventral process of slightly different shape. A comparative study of a substantial number of new specimens from numerous localities in the region from the Egrisi Range in the northwest to the Suram Range in the east (see material listed above) and a revision of previously studied material from both the Greater and the Lesser Caucasus revealed that the diagnostic characters indicated by ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV (1998) are variable and connected by transitional conditions. The aedeagus of males from the Lesser Caucasus tends to be slightly smaller (approximately 0.75–0.80 mm), but the populations from the Greater Caucasus are not constant regarding aedeagus size either. In material from the Egrisi and Suram ranges it is generally larger (0.90–0.95 mm) than in populations from the region in between (0.75–0.85 mm). In any case, a reliable separation of *O. hebes* and *O. fastigatus* based on morphological characters is not possible, suggesting that the material previously attributed to these species is in fact conspecific. Both names were made available in the same article. *Othius hebes* is here designated as the senior name and *O. fastigatus* its junior synonym.

*Othius hebes* is the most widespread of the micropterous *Othius* species of the Caucasus region, its distribution ranging from the Egrisi Range in the northwest across the

Eacha and Suram Ranges southeastwards to the western Trialeti Range and southwestwards to the Meskheti Range, and overlapping with the distributions of several other micropterous species (*O. egriscus* spec. nov.,

7.VIII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB); 1 ♀ [identification tentative], N Jvari, 42°49'58"N, 42°01'28"E, 620 m, stream valley with mixed deciduous forest, litter sifted, 9.VIII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB).



Map 2: Distribution of *Othius hebes*.

*O. svaneticus* ASSING, 1999, *O. serratus* ASSING, 1997, *O. rasmus* ASSING, 2019, *O. directus* ASSING, 2019).

*Othius ponticus* COIFFAIT, 1987

**Material examined: Georgia: Adjara:** 1 ♂, 7 km NE Batumi, 41°39'05"N, 41°45'51"E, 550 m, litter sifted, 9.VI.2021, leg. Brachat & Meybohm (cAss).

The distribution of this species ranges from Northeast Turkey (Rize, Artvin) to the environs of Batumi (ASSING 2019).

*Othius ushakovi* ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV, 1998

(Figs 11, 14–15, Map 3)

**Material examined: Georgia: Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti:** 1 ♂, 1 ♀, N Khaishi, 43°02'38"N, 42°10'20"E, 1250 m, mixed forest, moist litter near small stream sifted, 5.VIII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss); 1 ♂, 2 ♀ ♀, W Khaishi, 43°01'26"N, 42°05'50"E, 1430 m, mixed forest, litter near rotten logs and rotten trunks sifted, 6.VIII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 2 ♀ ♀, same data, but 11.VIII.2021 (cAss); 1 ♀, NW Khaishi, 43°01'28"N, 42°05'42"E, 1440 m, mixed forest, litter near rotten logs and rotten trunks sifted, 11.VIII.2021, leg. Schülke (MNB); 1 ♂, NW Khaishi, 43°01'22"N, 42°06'00"E, 1410 m, mixed forest, litter near trunks and logs sifted,

The above specimens represent the first records since the original description, which is based on five specimens from two localities to the east and southeast of Bokhunjara, Kodori Range, Zemo Svaneti (ASSING & SOLODOVNIKOV 1998). The known distribution is confined to the region close to the border with Abkhazia (Map 3). The male aedeagus and the male sternite IX are illustrated in Figs 11, 14–15.

*Othius unculatus* ASSING, 2019

(Map 3)

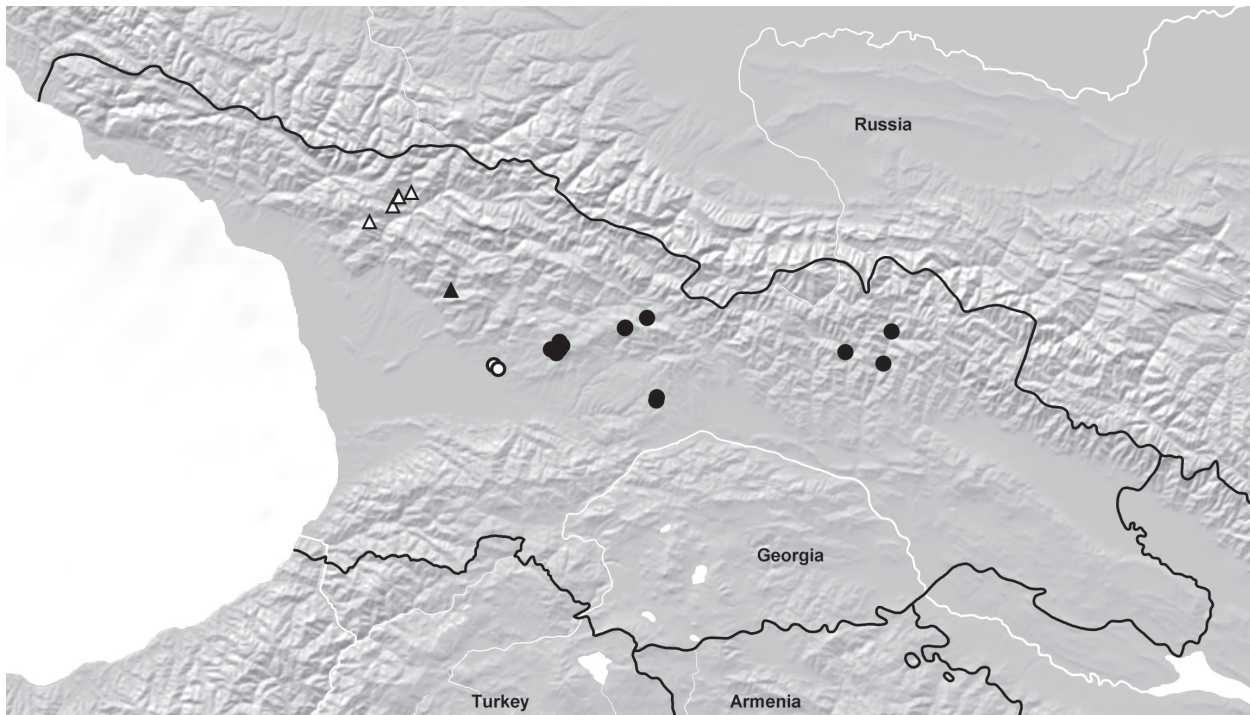
**Material examined: Georgia: Imereti:** 3 ♂ ♂, 4 ♀ ♀, N Kutaisi, Sataplia Nature Reserve, 42°18'58"N, 42°39'30"E, 330 m, mixed deciduous forest with large rocks, litter sifted, 16.VIII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB).

The original description of this recently described species is based on a unique male from Sataplia Nature Reserve (ASSING 2019) (Map 3).

*Othius svaneticus* ASSING, 1999

(Map 3)

**Material examined: Georgia: Imereti:** 6 ♂ ♂, 6 ♀ ♀, SW Ambrolauri, Nakerala pass, 42°23'09"N, 42°58'45"E,



**Map 3:** Distributions of species of the *O. crassus* group in North Georgia: *O. ushakovi* (white triangles); *O. egriscus* (black triangle); *O. unculatus* (white circles); *O. svaneticus* (black circles).

1440 m, fir forest margin, litter under rhododendron, spruce, and *Tussilago* sifted, 26.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♂, 1 ♀, pass 25 km SE Sachkhere, 42°10'05"N, 43°35'12"E, 1120 m, secondary beech forest, litter sifted, 23.X.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 3 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀, pass 25 km SE Sachkhere, 42°11'00"N, 43°35'19"E, 1090 m, beech forest, litter sifted, 24.X.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB). **Racha:** 2 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, SW Ambrolauri, N Nakerala pass, 42°24'41"N, 43°02'28"E, 1160 m, clearing in beech forest, beech litter at forest margin sifted, 26.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 1 ♀, N Nakerala pass, 42°24'31"N, 43°02'27"E, 1160 m, beech forest margin, litter sifted, 26.VII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 4 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, SE Oni, Lesora, 42°30'50"N, 43°31'37"E, 1440 m, graveyard with old trees, predominantly *Fagus*, litter sifted, 24.VII.2021, leg. Assing (cAss); 1 ♂, Lesora, 42°30'51"N, 43°31'36"E, 1410 m, graveyard with very old beech, litter and bark sifted, 19.VI.2021, leg. Brachat & Meybohm (cAss); 4 ♂♂, 6 ♀♀ [2 teneral], new pass road S Oni, 42°28'27"N, 43°24'23"E, 1810 m, moist montane forest with predominant hazelnut, litter sifted, 24.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB); 16 ♂♂, 10 ♀♀, new pass road S Oni, 42°28'1"N, 43°24'31"E, 1810 m, montane forest (*Corylus*, *Acer*) margin, litter sifted, 28.VII.2021, leg. Assing & Schülke (cAss, MNB).

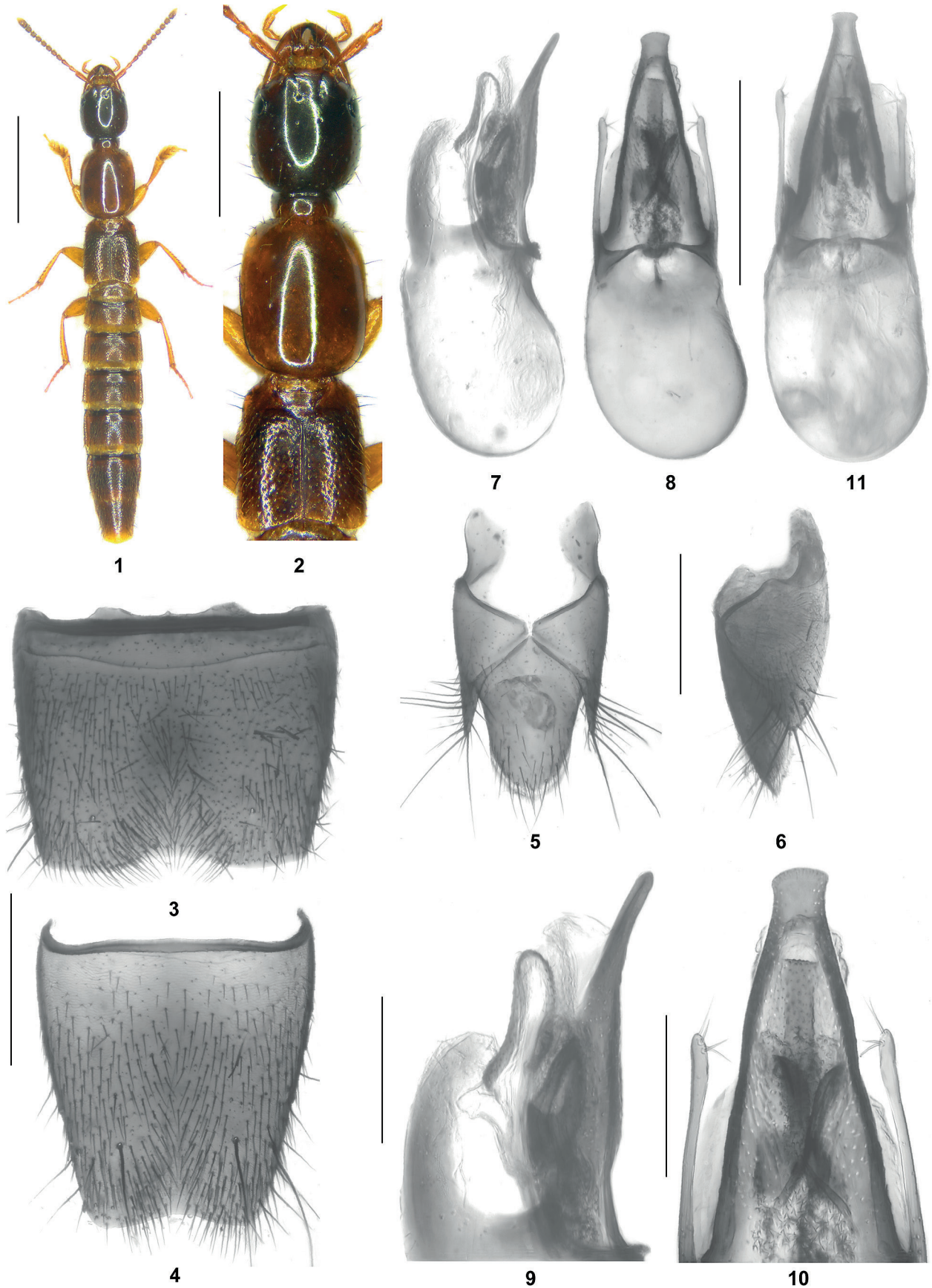
Aside from the male holotype and a female paratype from "Svanetien" (ASSING 1999), only few specimens from five localities, two at and near the Nakerala pass in Racha and three in Mtskheta-Mtianeti, were previously known (ASSING 2019). The currently known distribution is illustrated in Map 3.

*Othius egriscus* spec. nov.

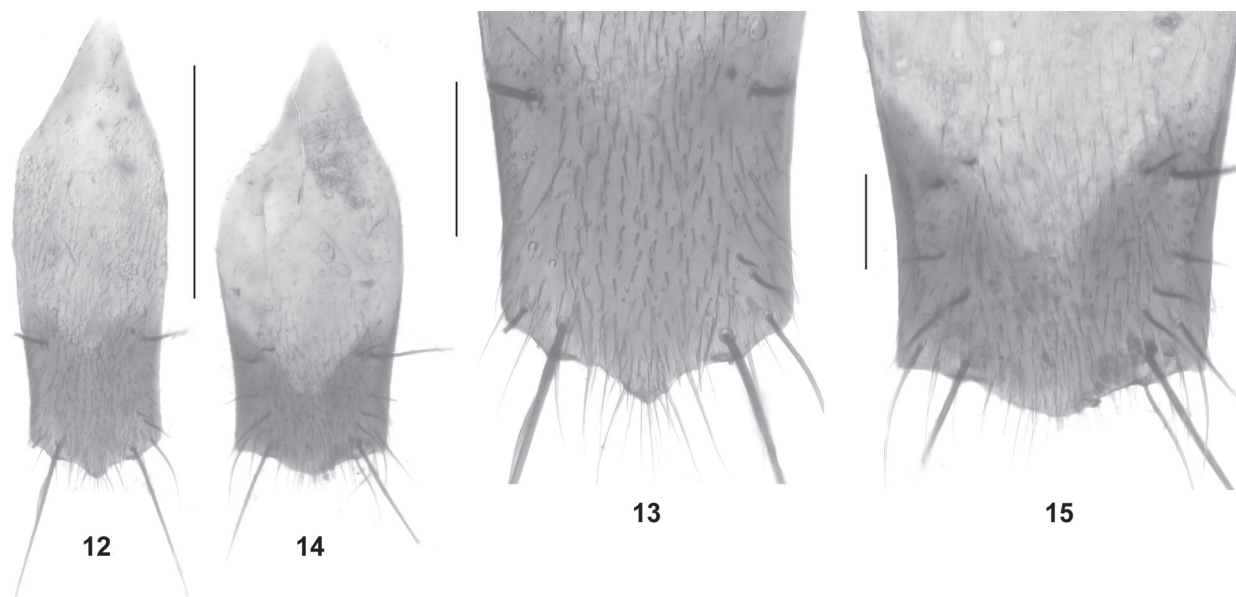
urn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:CD95C9DB-D170-4435-AA1B-43DE3338D0BC  
(Figs 1–10, 12–13, Map 3)

**Type material:** Holotype ♂: "GEORGIA [51] – Zemo Svaneti, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'54"N, 42°24'28"E, 580 m, 13.VIII.2021, V. Assing / Holotypus ♂ *Othius egriscus* sp. n. det. V. Assing 2021" (cAss). Paratypes: 13 ♂♂, 5 ♀♀: same data as holotype (cAss); 10 ♂♂, 4 ♀♀: "GEORGIA [GE2021-51]: Zemo Svaneti, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'54"N, 42°24'28"E, 580 m, track margin with predominant alder and hazelnut, litter sifted, 13.VIII.2021, M. Schülke" (MNB); 3 ♀♀ (2 slightly teneral): "N42°37'54 E42°24'25E (7), GG Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Lebarde-Tal 550 m, Brachat & Meybohm 14.6.2021" (cAss); 9 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀: "GEORGIA [56] – Zemo Svaneti, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'54"N, 42°24'28"E, 580 m, 16.X.2021, V. Assing" (cAss); 1 ♂, 1 ♀: "GEORGIA [GE2021-56]: Zemo Svaneti, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'54"N, 42°24'28"E, 580 m, track margin with alder and hazelnut, litter sifted, 16.X.2021, leg. M. Schülke" (MNB); 3 ♂♂: "GEORGIA [57] – Zemo Svaneti, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'58"N, 42°24'46"E, 580 m, 16.X.2021, V. Assing" (cAss); 2 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀: "GEORGIA [58] – Zemo Svaneti, N Martvili, Lebarde valley, 42°37'51"N, 42°24'20"E, 540 m, 17.X.2021, V. Assing" (cAss).

**Etymology:** The specific epithet is an adjective derived from Egrisi, the name of the mountain range where the type locality is situated.



Figs 1–11: *Othius egriscicus* (1–10) and *O. ushakovi* (11). 1 – male habitus; 2 – forebody; 3 – male sternite VII; 4 – male sternite VIII; 5–6 – male tergites IX–X in dorsal and in lateral view; 7–8, 11 – aedeagus in lateral and in ventral view; 9–10 – apical portion of aedeagus in lateral and in ventral view. Scale bars: 1: 2.0 mm; 2: 1.0 mm; 3–8, 11: 0.5 mm; 9–10: 0.2 mm.



Figs 12–15: *Othius egriscus* (12–13) and *O. ushakovi* (14–15). 12, 14 – male sternite IX; 13, 15 – posterior portion of male sternite IX. Scale bars: 12, 14: 0.5 mm; 13, 15: 0.1 mm.

**Description:** Measurements (mm) and ratios (range, arithmetic mean;  $n = 22$ ): HL: 0.91–1.01, 0.95; HW: 0.79–0.92, 0.86; PW: 0.91–1.04, 0.97; PL: 1.16–1.36, 1.25; EL: 0.69–0.79, 0.73; TiL: 0.77–0.91, 0.84; TaL: 0.63–0.76, 0.68; ML: 1.00–1.03, 1.02; TL: 5.9–8.6, 7.6; FL: 3.2–4.0, 3.7; HL/HW: 1.07–1.17, 1.12; HW/PW: 0.85–0.94, 0.88; PL/PW: 1.23–1.32, 1.29; EL/PL: 0.55–0.62, 0.58; TaL/TiL: 0.75–0.85, 0.81.

Habitus as in Fig. 1. Coloration: body reddish to dark-brown with the head usually blackish; legs dark-yellow; antennae reddish to brown.

Head (Fig. 2) weakly oblong, usually slightly widened posteriorly, and somewhat narrower than pronotum (see ratios HL/HW and HW/PW); anterior and posterior pairs of frontal punctures present; median dorsal portion impunctate; remaining punctation sparse and rather fine; integument with fine isodiametric microreticulation. Eyes small, approximately one-fourth to one-third as long as postocular region in dorsal view.

Pronotum (Fig. 2) weakly tapering posteriad; microsculpture predominantly composed of transverse striae.

Elytra (Fig. 2) slightly more than half as long as pronotum (see ratio EL/PL); punctation rather dense and coarse; interstices without microsculpture. Hind wings absent.

Abdomen with fine and dense punctation; interstices with fine transverse microsculpture; posterior margin of tergite VII without palisade fringe.

♂: protarsomeres I–IV strongly dilated; sternites VII (Fig. 3) in postero-median portion with triangular impression with dense pubescence, posterior margin distinctly concave in the middle; sternite VIII (Fig. 4) impressed along middle, posterior margin broadly and shallowly concave; hemitergites IX (Figs 5–6) short and broad (lateral view), apices obtuse in lateral view; sternite IX (Figs 12–13) moderately slender, more strongly sclerotized in posterior third (brown) than in

anterior two-thirds (yellow), posterior margin almost acutely produced in the middle; tergite X (Fig. 5) unmodified, with membranous appendage; aedeagus shaped as in Figs 7–10; internal sac with pair of moderately large sclerotized structures, basally with numerous thin coils.

♀: protarsomeres I–IV distinctly less dilated than in male; tergite X apically with approximately ten distinctly modified, stout and apically curved setae.

**Comparative notes:** Based on the morphology of the aedeagus and other characters, *O. egriscus* belongs to the *O. crassus* group. It is reliably distinguished from other representatives of this group only by the male primary and secondary sexual characters. The only other species with similar modifications of the male sternite IX (posterior margin obtusely to acutely produced in the middle; posterior portions extensively sclerotized (brown) even along middle) is *O. ushakovi*, this evident synapomorphy suggesting that both species represent adelphotaxa. The new species is distinguished from *O. ushakovi* by a narrower, more oblong, and posteriorly more extensively sclerotized male sternite IX with a more medially more strongly produced posterior margin and by a slightly smaller aedeagus with less strongly sclerotized, shorter, less slender, and apically less acute sclerotized structures in the internal sac. For comparison, the aedeagus and the male sternite IX of *O. ushakovi* are illustrated in Figs 11, 13–14.

**Distribution and natural history:** All the specimens were collected in three close localities in Lebarde valley in the southern slopes of the Egrisi Range, some 25 km to the north of Martvili. The specimens were collected by sifting leaf litter and by soil-washing in, and at the margin of, mixed deciduous forests (mostly hazelnut and alder), partly with large rocks, at altitudes of 550–580 m. Two specimens collected in June are slightly teneral.



## Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Volker Brachat (Geretsried) and Heinrich Meybohm (Großhansdorf) for the generous gift of Staphylinidae collected during their field trip to Georgia in June 2021. Benedikt Feldmann (Münster) and Michael Schülke proof-read and reviewed the manuscript. Their helpful suggestions are appreciated.

## References

- ASSING, V. 1997a: The species of *Othius* STEPHENS, 1832 [recte: 1829] of the Canary Islands (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Xantholininae). – *Vieraea* **25** [1996]: 103–115.
- ASSING, V. 1997b: A revision of *Othius* STEPHENS, 1829. III. The species of the Western Palaearctic region exclusive of the Atlantic Islands (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae: Xantholininae). – *Nova Supplementa Entomologica* (Berlin) **10**: 3–130.
- ASSING, V. 1998: A revision of *Othius* STEPHENS. V. The species of the Himalayan region (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae, Xantholininae). – *Beiträge zur Entomologie*, Berlin **48** (2): 293–342.
- ASSING, V. 1999a: A revision of *Othius* STEPHENS, 1829. VII. The species of the Eastern Palaearctic region east of the Himalayas (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). – *Beiträge zur Entomologie*, Berlin **49** (1): 3–96.
- ASSING, V. 1999b: A revision of *Othius* STEPHENS (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae). VIII. Further records, new species, and a new synonym. – *Linzer Biologische Beiträge* **31** (2): 661–691.
- ASSING, V. 2003: A revision of Othiini. XIII. Horizontal and vertical distribution of *Othius*, new species, and additional records (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Staphylininae). – *Entomological Problems* **33** (1–2): 69–88.
- ASSING, V. 2005: A revision of Othiini. XIV. New species, new synonyms, and new records (Insecta: Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). – *Entomological Problems* **35** (1): 51–67.
- ASSING, V. 2015: A revision of Othiini. XIX. Two new species of *Othius*, the first record of the genus from Vietnam, and additional records (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Staphylininae). – *Linzer Biologische Beiträge* **47** (2): 1235–1250.
- ASSING, V. 2018: A revision of Othiini. XX. Two new species of *Othius*, the first record of the genus from Myanmar, and additional records (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Staphylininae). – *Linzer Biologische Beiträge* **50** (1): 25–40.
- ASSING, V. 2019: A revision of Othiini. XXI. Seven new species, a new synonymy, and additional records, with a review of the *Othius* fauna of Georgia (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Staphylininae). – *Acta Musei Moraviae, Scientiae Biologicae* **104** (1): 45–73.
- ASSING, V. & SCHÜLKE, M. 2017: On the *Ischnosoma* fauna of Georgia (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Tachyporinae). – *Contributions to Entomology* **67** (2): 195–206.
- ASSING, V. & SOLODOVNIKOV, A. 1998: Three new species of *Othius* STEPHENS from the Caucasus (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae: Xantholininae). – *Zoosystematica Rossica* **7**: 299–305.
- ASSING, V. & WUNDERLE, P. 1995: A revision of the Madeiran species of the genus *Othius* STEPHENS (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). – *Boletim do Museu Municipal do Funchal* **45** [1993]: 53–65.