

## SCIENTIFIC NOTE

### TYPE LOCALITY OF *PSYLLIODES CUCULLATUS* (ILLIGER) (COLEOPTERA: CHRYSOMELIDAE)

*Psylliodes cucullatus* (Illiger, 1807) is widely distributed in the Palearctic region, from Western Europe to the Far East (Doguet 1994a; Gruev and Döberl 1997). The lectotype for this species was designated by Doguet (1994b), who selected a female specimen (erroneously reported as being a male) now bearing the following labels [/ separate lines; // separate labels]: “Cucullata / N.\* / Spergulae Gyll / Lusit. / Brunov. Dahl. // Psylliodes cucullata / Ill. LECTOTYPE ♀ / S. Doguet des. 1993”. The locality label was not originally pinned with the specimen, but was a tray label (Doguet 1994b). The word “Lusit.” is an abbreviation of Lusitania, the Latin name for Portugal. *Psylliodes cucullatus* is closely related to *Psylliodes heydeni* Weise, 1888, a taxon also described from Portugal and based on specimens collected by Heyden (1870) in Serra do Gêrez (north Portugal). The distribution of *P. heydeni* is restricted to the Iberian Peninsula and southern France (Doguet 1994b). A lectotype was also designated by Doguet, who selected a specimen bearing the following labels: “Sr. de Gerez / Heyden // Heydeni m. 87 // heydeni m. 87 // Psylliodes cucullata / heydeni Wse. / LECTOTYPE ♀ / S. Doguet des. 1993”. Both taxa can be accurately identified based on clear diagnostic characters including the body and elytral shape, as well as male and female genitalia (Doguet 1994a).

The status of these taxa was modified by Heikertinger (1921), who considered them geographical races, thus downgrading *P. heydeni* to subspecific status because the name *P. cucullatus* has precedence. This view was subsequently followed by many authors (Bastazo *et al.* 1993; Doguet 1994a; Gruev and Döberl 1997; Warchalowski 2003; Baselga and Novoa 2006), but *P. heydeni* was again upgraded to specific status by Nadein (2007). This decision was justified by Nadein (2007) based on: (i) the degree of morphological differences between both taxa, and (ii) the sympatric distribution of both taxa in the Iberian Peninsula. However, no other specimen of *P. cucullatus* s. str. except the type series has ever been recorded from the Iberian Peninsula (Biondi 1991; Bastazo *et al.* 1993; Baselga and Novoa 2006; Nadein 2007). At this point one could suspect that the type series of *P. cucullatus*, if coming from Portugal, could in fact be conspecific with *P. heydeni* (thus leading to a primary synonymy). However, this is not the case as accurately noted by Doguet (1994b), and as I could conclude after comparing the lectotype

of *P. cucullatus* with the type series of *Psylliodes spergulae* Gyllenhal. The latter is a synonym of *P. cucullatus*, described based on Swedish specimens (no labels bearing additional information). In summary, the lectotype of *P. cucullatus* is conspecific with other north European specimens, such as the type series of *P. spergulae*, and not with any other Iberian specimen. Therefore, the sympatric condition of *P. cucullatus* and *P. heydeni* is supported only by the interpretation of “Lusit. Brunov. Dahl.” as being a Portuguese locality. In my opinion, this interpretation is not correct.

The original description of *P. cucullatus* by Illiger (1807) states the origin of the specimens as “Aus Portugall [Portugal]: Graf v. Hoffmanssegg; aus der Gegend von Braunschweig an Thymus Serpyllum [serpyllum]: Dahl.”. Therefore, Illiger refers to two different series of specimens, one collected in Portugal by Hoffmanssegg and the other collected in the surroundings of Braunschweig (Germany) by Dahl. The word “Brunov.” in the type series’ tray label is an abbreviation for Brunovicus, one of the numerous old names of Braunschweig [Brunswick] (see <http://cerl.sub.uni-goettingen.de>). As none of the specimens belonging to the type series bears specific geographic information, the lectotype designated by Doguet could have come either from Portugal or Germany. Since it is conspecific with northern European specimens and no Iberian specimen of *P. cucullatus* is known, the most parsimonious interpretation leads to the conclusion that the type locality of *P. cucullatus* is Braunschweig, Germany. This interpretation yields a straightforward explanation for the distribution ranges of *P. cucullatus* and *P. heydeni*. The latter replaces the former in the Iberian Peninsula and southern France, and no geographic overlap has been observed. Therefore, since *P. cucullatus* and *P. heydeni* are allopatric taxa, the decision of considering them vicariant species or subspecies remains arbitrary. Morphological differences between both taxa are evident and constant (no morphological clines exist), but in the absence of further biological information (*i.e.* interbreeding capacity), both the lumpers and splitters views could be justified. In order to preserve nomenclatural stability, I will not make any further decision, thus maintaining the specific status for both taxa as proposed by the original author of *P. heydeni* (Weise 1881–1893) and the last reviewer (Nadein 2007).

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**Andrés Baselga, Departamento de Zoología, Facultad de Biología, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Rúa Lope Gómez de Marzoa s/n, 15782 Santiago de Compostela, SPAIN.**

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