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_Balcus violaceus_ (Fabricius), senior synonym of _Balcus niger_ Sharp and _B. signatus_ Broun (Coleoptera: Cleridae: Clerinae)

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Balcus violaceus (Fabricius), senior synonym of Balcus niger Sharp and B. signatus Broun (Coleoptera: Cleridae: Clerinae)

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Abstract. The elytra of Balcus signatus Broun (Coleoptera: Cleridae: Clerinae) from New Zealand have pale markings. Such markings, most prominently found in females, represent intraspecific variations of Balcus violaceus (Fabricius). Accordingly, Balcus signatus Brown is synonymized with Notoxus violaceus Fabricius, new synonymy. Four habitus figures of Balcus violaceus (Fabricius) are presented to display the range of elytral color variation in the species.

Discussion

Radford (1981) enumerated the Fabrician Australian and New Zealand coleopteran types in the Banks collection of the British Museum of Natural History (Opitz 2009: 86). Moreover, in that work Radford (1981: 194) synonymized Balcus niger Sharp with Notoxus violaceus Fabricius. Also, Radford stated that “... this species (B. niger Sharp) varies considerably in size, colour and markings on the elytra, which may be three pale spots, two, one or none at all”. Apparently, Radford was not aware that specimens of Balcus Sharp (Coleoptera: Cleridae: Clerinae) with pale elytral markings were heretofore assigned to Balcus signatus Broun (1880: 333). I have examined an extensive series of the beetles in question and find no characters that would indicate they are distinct species. I herein place Balcus signatus Broun into synonymy with Notoxus violaceus Fabricius 1787: 127, new synonymy, now Balcus violaceus (Fabricius) (Fig. 1-4). For the most part, the pale markings on the elytra are found in female specimens. Elytral coloration does not involve geographical variation. The habitus illustrations are provided to indicate the extent of elytral color variation within the species.

Balcus violaceus (Fabricius 1787: 127) [Notoxus]  
= Balcus niger Sharp 1877: 7.  
= Balcus signatus Broun 1880: 333, new synonymy.

Literature Cited


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Figures 1-4. Habitus of *Balcus violaceus* (Linnaeus). 1) Male. 2) Female. 3) Female. 4) Female.