

## **Review of the biology of the Australian genus *Paracephala* Saunders, 1868 (Coleoptera: Buprestidae)**

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**Abstract:** A review of the biology and host plant records for four of the seven described Australian species of the genus *Paracephala* Saunders, 1868 is provided here.

### **Introduction**

The genus *Paracephala* Saunders, 1868 contains seven known species of mostly dull black and/or purplish buprestids, the adults of which are known to be associated with the flowers of native grass species (Poaceae). Perhaps the larvae also breed in the grass stems (or roots). They are presently included in the subfamily Agrilinae, tribe Coraebini (unplaced) (Bellamy, 2003). A review of the biology of four species is provided here. I have provided authorities for plant species names where relevant as these were usually lacking in the original references.

### **Biological Review**

#### *Paracephala borea* Bellamy, 1988

Distribution: Australia (Queensland, Northern Territory).

Larval host-plant: Not recorded.

Adult host-plant: *Stipa* sp. (Poaceae)(Bellamy, 1988).

Biology: The adults apparently frequent the flowers of a grass, *Stipa* sp. (Poaceae) in central coastal Queensland (Bellamy, 1988).

Life-stages: The egg, larva and pupa have not been described.

Published collection records with biological data: 6, "Mourangee", Edungalba, Queensland, 21 Dec. 1970, E.E.. Adams, on "white spear grass" (*Stipa* sp., Poaceae)(Bellamy, 1988).

#### *Paracephala deserta* Bellamy, 1988

Distribution: Australia (Western Australia).

Larval host-plant: Not recorded.

Adult host-plant: Unidentified Poaceae.

Biology: The adults apparently visit grass flowers (Poaceae) near the Great Victoria Desert of Western Australia (Bellamy, 1988).

Life-stages: The egg, larva and pupa have not been described.

Published collection records with biological data: 10, 15 km NNE of Neale Junction, Western Australia (28°13'S, 125°53'E), 20 Sept. 1982, B. Hanich & T.F. Houston, on "grass flowers" (Poaceae)(Bellamy, 1988).

*Paracephala murina* (Thomson, 1878)

Distribution: Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria).

Larval host-plant: Not recorded.

Adult host-plant: *Chrysopogon fallax* S.T. Blake (Poaceae)(Brooks, 1969).

Biology: Brooks (1969) recorded the adults of this species [incorrectly cited as *Paracephala aenea* Blackburn] feeding on the flowers of Golden-Beard Grass, *Chrysopogon fallax* S.T. Blake [incorrectly cited as *Chrysopogon fallax*] in north-eastern Queensland. Bellamy (1988) noted that E.E. Adams of Edungalba, central Queensland had collected adults from “grass flowers”.

Life-stages: The egg, larva and pupa have not been described.

Published collection records with biological data: None available.

Further comments: Bellamy (2003) overlooked the record of Brooks (1969), even though he cited this paper elsewhere in his catalogue.

*Paracephala pistacina* (Hope, 1846)

Distribution: Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia).

Larval host-plant: Not recorded.

Adult host-plant: *Stipa* sp. (Poaceae)(Bellamy, 1988).

Biology: Bellamy (1988) noted that specimens of this species from the Bogan River, New South Wales, had been collected “on corkscrew grass” [*Stipa* sp., Poaceae], so it appears that adults may be pollen feeders.

Life-stages: The egg, larva and pupa have not been described.

Published collection records with biological data: None available.

Further comments: Bellamy (2003) omitted his own 1988 record of *Stipa* sp. as an adult host from his catalogue!

## References

- Bellamy, C.L. (1988). The classification and phylogeny of Australian Coroebini with a revision of the genera *Paracephala*, *Meliboeithon* and *Dinocephalia*. *Invertebrate Taxonomy*, 2: 413-453.
- Bellamy, C.L. (2003). *Coleoptera: Buprestoidea*. In: Houston, W.W.K. (ed) *Zoological Catalogue of Australia. Volume 29.5*. CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne: 1-485.
- Brooks, J.G. (1969). North Queensland Coleoptera. Their food or host plants. Part IV. *North Queensland Naturalist*, 36 (149): 3-5.