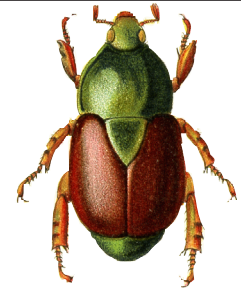


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The Genera *Gnorimus* and *Trichius* from France to the Middle-Orient

by Olivier Décobert and Pascal Stéfani

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In France, we have three genera of scarabs in the subfamily Trichinae, itself included in the cetoniids: there are *Gnorimus*, *Trichius*, and *Osmoderma*. *Osmoderma* has a single species, *O. eremita* (Scopoli, 1763) which is protected by law and not included in this article.

Historically, there was a nomenclatural conflict between *Gnorimus* (Le Peletier de Saint Fargeau & Audinet-Serville, 1828) and *Aleurostictus* (Kirby, 1827).

In 2008, the resolution was published on <http://beetlebloguk.blogspot.com>: "The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has just ruled to suppress the senior name *Aleurostictus* for *Gnorimus*, and only use *Gnorimus* from now on, for species such as our rare noble chafer. In 1827, Kirby described a new taxon called *Aleurostictus*. The following year (1828), Le Peletier described *Gnorimus*, based on the same taxon, apparently not knowing that it had



Pascal Stéfani from France is a new contributor. We have included a short biography of Pascal which can be found on page 14 of this issue.

already been named. Le Peletier's work became better known, and the scientific community began to refer to the 'beast with two names' as *Gnorimus* (the junior name) rather than *Aleurostictus* (the senior name). 150 years later, the error was noticed. At this stage the name *Gnorimus* was in universal

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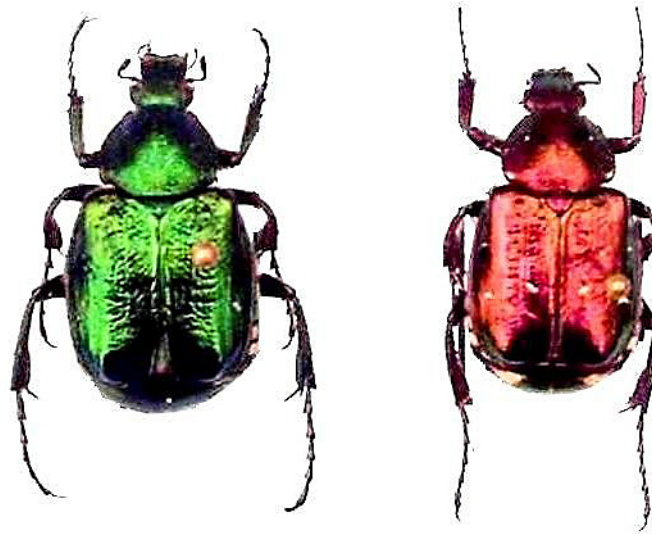
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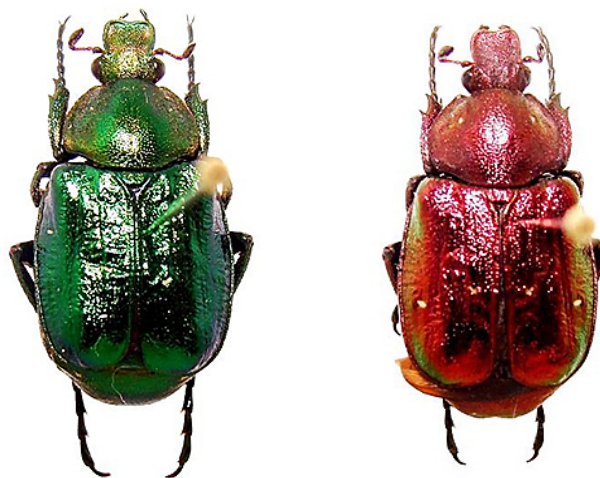
use and the name *Aleurostictus* was forgotten. Finally a successful application was put to the Commission to suppress *Aleurostictus*, and the use of the junior, but prevalent, name *Gnorimus* to be used from now on. Anyone interested in this subject should check out the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*.”

After reading the article by Andrew Smith (see bibliography) and a confirmation on the ICZN Internet site (source: http://www.iczn.org/final_paragraph_examples.html), this article will definitively be about our *Gnorimus* from France or elsewhere.

Two species are found in France: *Gnorimus nobilis* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *Gnorimus variabilis* (Linnaeus, 1758).



Gnorimus nobilis (Linnaeus) – Mont Aigoual in the South of France (green-typical and red form).



Gnorimus nobilis macedonicus (Macedonia).



Gnorimus nobilis rare chromatic forms (purple on the left) from the Gorges du Verdon – South of France.



Gnorimus nobilis bicolor form.



Habitat of the purple form of *Gnorimus nobilis* in the South of France (Gorges du Verdon).

The color of *G. nobilis* is structural (see *Scarabs* #35 for the genus *Protaetia* and *Scarabs* #42 for European Cetonids) and because of the existence of different wavelengths of the light spectrum, this species can also be blue or black (to give two examples) but these are rarely found in nature. Bicolored forms also exist. Its size can vary between 14 and 23 mm. *G. nobilis* is often seen on flowers in the summer.

G. variabilis can be differentiated from *G. nobilis* by its size and general shape. But for that species, the variability is associated with the density of the marks seen on the cuticle. Sometimes, there is absolutely nothing and the pronotum and elytra are black. But habitually, *G. variabilis* has white or yellow spots on the elytra. More rarely, these marks can occupy a large area and yield spectacular forms of this insect.



Typical *Gnorimus variabilis*.



Atypical *Gnorimus variabilis* (male & female) without spots.



Rare white and yellow forms of *Gnorimus variabilis*.

G. variabilis, contrary to *G. nobilis*, is rarely seen and it is often necessary to use traps baited with wine and bananas (see *Scarabs* #36) to collect this species. It can also be found in tree cavities, in decaying wood, where the larvae feed, and can be collected for breeding.

As one can see from the previous photographs, males of *Gnorimus* can be differentiated of females by their curved tibiae of the middle leg.



Le Masbonnet, Department of Lozère- South of France, and surrounding forest rich in chestnut trees in autumn. Habitat of *Gnorimus variabilis*.



Hollow chestnut trees. In these cavities, there is decaying wood where larvae of *Gnorimus variabilis* can grow. Adults are sometimes seen in these places.

Leaving France and going toward the southeast, other *Gnorimus* appear in Turkey: *G. armeniacus* (Reitter, 1887) and *G. bartelsi* (Faldermann, 1836). The species *G. subcostatus* (Ménétrières, 1832), is found in Azerbaïdjan and Iran.



Gnorimus bartelsi.



Gnorimus subcostatus.



There is another European species endemic in Sicily (the island between southern Italy and North Africa): *G. decempunctatus* (Helf, 1833). The North-African *G. baborensis* (Bedel, 1919) is endemic to Algeria.



Gnorimus decempunctatus (typical and orange form).

Three other *Gnorimus* exist in Asia (China, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam) and far-eastern Russia. The last species of this genus is found in North America: *Gnorimus maculosus* (Knoch, 1801), surely well known by most of readers of *Scarabs!*

Nevertheless, the nomenclature has recently been changed for that species, because one reads *Gnorimella maculosa* in the *Checklist and Nomenclatural Authority File of the Scarabaeoidea of the Nearctic Realm* by Andrew Smith (Canadian Museum of Nature).

There are three species of the genus *Trichius* (Fabricius, 1775) in France: *T. zonatus* (Germar, 1829), *T. sexualis* (Bedel, 1906) and *T. fasciatus* (Linnaeus, 1758). These little scarabs are often seen on flowers in the summer where they feed on pollen. They range in size between 8 and 14 mm.



Trichius zonatus.



Melanistic *Trichius zonatus.*



Trichius sexualis.

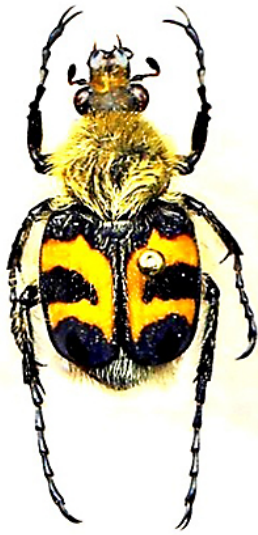


Trichius orientalis.



Trichius abdominalis.

Trichius fasciatus is found from Europa to Asia. *T. sexualis* is limited to Europa whereas the range of *T. zonatus* extends from Europa to North Africa. In Turkey, the species *T. orientalis* (Reitter, 1894) can be encountered and more toward the east, in Iran, there is *T. abdominalis* (Menetr., 1832).



Trichius fasciatus.



A good place to search for *Trichius* species (inset) which are frequently seen on these flowers (here in Lozère).



Habitat of *Trichius zonatus* – Forest of Montecot (west of Paris).

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Dynastids and Their Larvae in France

by Olivier Décobert

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At the end of December 2008, I was searching for beetles under stones in the South of France when I found a scarab larva (Photo 1). It was about 35 mm long and I had no idea what species it was. I collected this larva for breeding and put it in a box with decaying wood and bits of carrot, because I suspected that it was eating roots under the stone.

It grew a little but did not molt. In the beginning of April, 2009, it transformed into a pupa (Photo 2). Because of its size (20 mm) and the presence of a little horn, I now had a good idea of the identity of the future scarab: *Phyllognathus excavatus* Forst. It was the first time I had seen this insect.



Photo 1: *Phyllognathus excavatus* Forst. larva



Photo 2: *Phyllognathus excavatus* Forst. pupa

One month later, I obtained the adult and was able to verify that my identification was correct (Photos 3 and 4). This little scarab belongs to the Dynastidae family.



Photos 3 and 4: *Phyllognathus excavatus* Forst. adult

I had previously collected other French species and larvae in this scarab family. The most impressive dynastid of my country is *Oryctes nasicornis* Linnaeus. In *Scarabs* #28, I showed a male found in the North of France and wrote that this species is generally bigger in the South. Photo 5 depicts a 40 mm male and Photos 6 & 7 show a larva (second instar-35 mm and third instar-60 mm) I found in the same southern region in decaying wood.



Photo 5: *Oryctes nasicornis* Linnaeus



Photos 6 (second instar) and 7 (third instar) larvae of *Oryctes nasicornis* Linnaeus

After *Phyllognathus* and *Oryctes*, we have still two other French genera in the Dynastidae family: *Calicnemis* and *Pentodon*.

Calicnemis latreilli Castelnau is a small (13-17 mm) and very localized dynastid: it can only be found on the coast in the southern part of my country. Its larva grows in pieces of wood which lie along the beaches. It becomes rarer and rarer because of the cleaning of beaches linked to tourism. I never saw a living adult but did find a larva (size about 20 mm) on a Southern beach near the town of Argelès (region of Perpignan), in February 2009 (Photos 8 & 9). Unfortunately, it died quickly as this species is not easy to rear in captivity.



Photos 8 & 9: *Calicnemis latreilli* Castelnau (larva)



Photo 10: *Calicnemis latreilli* Castelnau (pair)
Photo by Pascal Stéfani

A second species of French *Calicnemis* was described in 1996 (*C. atlanticus* Mosconi) but it might be a subspecies of *C latreilli*. The general aspect is similar.

The last genus is *Pentodon* (Photo 11). Here, we have two species in this genus. Their sizes are between 17 and 26 mm. I have collected *Pentodon bidens* Pallas (Photo 11-right). The other French Dynastid I have never found (adult or larva) is *Pentodon algerinus* Herbst which is very closely related to *P. bidens*.

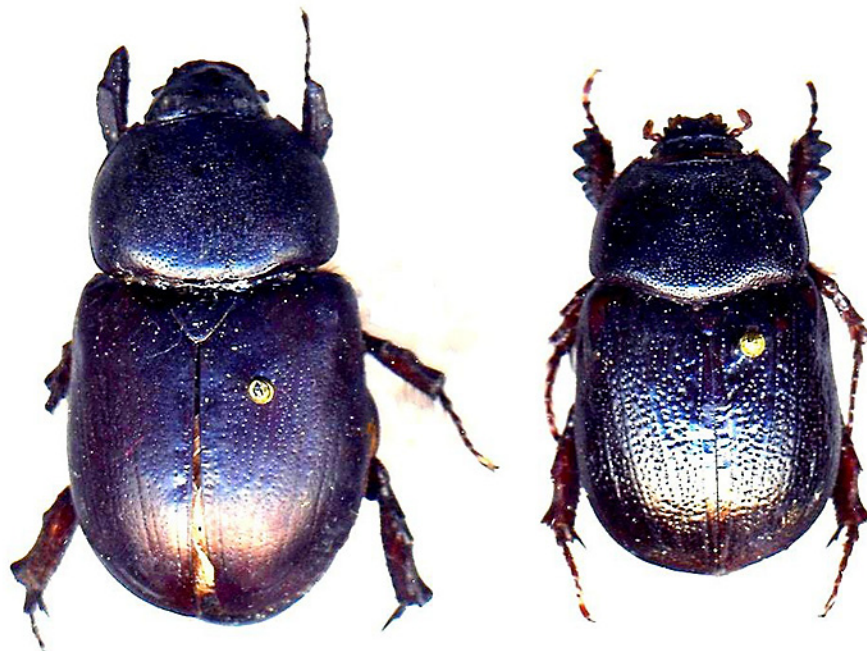


Photo 11: *Pentodon* sp. and *Pentodon bidens* Pallas



Photo 12 – Crest, a small town in the South-East of France that is the habitat of *Pentodon bidens* Pallas

Pentodon bidens has a large distribution in the South of France. The last time I found this species was in April 2004 in the town of Crest (Photo 12). This scarab had been attracted to light and was on the ground, along the road, where I saw it during an evening walk.

A mystery to finish: in August 1989, I found a *Pentodon* (Photo 11, left) ten kilometers from the town of Béziers. It was on the sandy coast, dead and in a bad state. For a long time, I had this scarab identified as *P. idiota* Herbst, a third *Pentodon* given as a French species in past years, but this has not been recently confirmed. It could also be an aberrant *P. bidens* or *P. algerinum*. In this locality, these scarabs dig in the sand, and this behavior results in abrasion of the head and protibiae, making identification of this specimen uncertain.

I have never seen the larvae of *Pentodon*, which live in the ground and feed on roots. This will be my next challenge for French dynastids, I suppose!



Boxes I use for rearing
Oryctes nasicornis larvae.

My daughter Emilie
holding two *Oryctes*
nasicornis larvae.



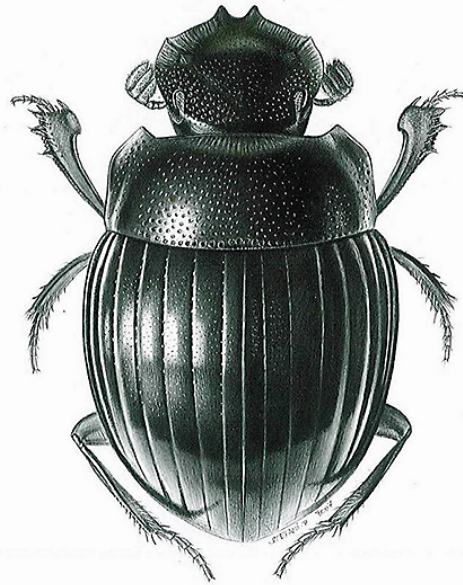
Pascal Stéfani is an amateur entomologist and animal painter. He was born in the North of France in 1974 and has been deeply interested in nature since childhood. Fascinated by reptiles and amphibians at first, he quickly enlarged his field of interest, encouraged by his nature-loving parents, and began to study and collect insects. Today entomology has become a consuming passion and is an important aspect of his life and of his family.

Pascal would have liked to engage in scientific studies and become a professional entomologist or researcher. Unfortunately (by his own admission) was not as proficient in mathematics as he needed to be. Instead, he followed his second life-long passion and enrolled in a renowned art school, the Institut Saint Luc in Belgium, where he enjoyed training in advanced graphics. Valedictorian of his class, he quickly found a job as an illustrator. It was only later on, working on a pedagogic farm (this is a classic farm where animals are seen by children or other people who come to visit, and explanations are given to visitors by the owners of the farm or their employees; teaching is the objective, not productivity) where he was able to combine his two passions in designing pedagogic panels, which are like a black board in a school, for writing explanations for visitors, generally accompanied by drawings and photos.

In 2000 Pascal started working for a protestant charity association, where he taught a drawing and photography classes. He helped to accomplish a great number artistic projects and the management of the association also allowed him to perfect his scientific drawing skills through a series of training courses in the National Museum of Natural History in Paris between 2005 and 2007. At first Pascal worked in the Great Evolution Gallery, tutored by Mr. Pascal Le Roch, and later on, in the Entomology Department thanks to Professor

Jean Legrand and the advice of Gilbert Hodebert.

Some of the illustrations he executed during these training courses have been published in the magazine of the French Entomologic Society, in collaboration with Dr. Thierry Deuve and Dr. Olivier Montreuil - see Pascal's illustration below:



At the same time, he has written a number of articles and notes in several French entomology publications, while continuing his field research with other entomologists such as Olivier Décobert. This remains his favorite activity.

In March 2009 the association, struck by the economic crisis, had to let him go. Since then he has been trying to establish himself as an independent painter and illustrator. In order to develop his business, he does a lot of networking and organizes exhibitions. At the same time, he continues to teach drawing classes for several associations. His greatest dream is to become a full-time scientific illustrator. This contribution to *Scarabs* might be a first step. Already a father and awaiting a second child, this project has become a necessity. Pascal is open to and grateful for all your proposals.

In Past Years - XXX - 1985

by Henry F. Howden

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We spent a rare summer and autumn in Ottawa, writing papers and collecting locally. We also had another encounter with bureaucracy at Carleton University. When I was originally hired, I was promised a half-time secretary who would be able to take dictation. Having some experience with universities over the years, I had this in writing. After a few years, every new administration from the department head upwards, tried to take away the position. I said that all they had to do was renegotiate my contract, add the secretary's salary to mine and I would hire a replacement myself. This argument went on for some years, since only administrators were supposed to have secretaries. Finally, some administrator with a slightly elevated IQ, decided to make me director of the "Evolutionary and Systematic Unit", which consisted of Stewart and Jarmila Peck and Anne and me. This made the administration happy, and all I had to do was write a report on the "Unit's" activities every year. I took some pleasure in pointing out that in most years the Unit and associated graduate students published more than many of the larger "units". This calmed my dislike of having to do what I considered useless: administration.

Before Clarke Scholtz left to return to South Africa he extended an invitation to some of the Ottawa



Photo 8: Pretoria, South Africa; not the view of an African city usually shown in the news!

entomologists to visit him in December. The result was that seven of us, Stewart and Jarmila Peck (beetles), Eugene Munroe (moths), Bill Mason (parasitic wasps), Mike Sanbourne (wasps) and Anne and I, flew to South Africa, leaving Ottawa on December 5, 1985.

We stayed in Pretoria (Photo 8) until December 10, collecting, visiting the Transvaal Museum, renting a car and getting supplies. For the first two days it rained hard, which was fine for some insect activity, but kept us indoors. We left Pretoria in two cars (one, a University van driven by Clarke and the second, a rented car which I drove), arriving in Graskop on the eastern escarpment about 3 PM. As soon as we were settled in cabins in a tourist park, we went collecting 4 km southwest of town and set traps



Photo 9: Graskop; not a scenic picture but it shows that when it rained, it poured.



Photo 10: Clarke collecting in Kruger while the attending ranger stood by with Clarke's weapon.



Photo 11: One of the animals in Kruger National Park that we preferred to observe from a car.

in a wooded area. A black light at the cabin attracted one coprid, one dynastid, a number of melolonthids, some cerambycids and other Coleoptera.

The next morning we went back to our trap site 4 km southwest of town, checked out traps and set up a flight intercept trap (FIT). It started to rain as we finished setting up the FIT and we returned to town. It poured (Photo 9) until 3 PM, then stopped long enough for us to return to our trap area. All traps were OK, but the yield was only two dung beetles.

The evening and following morning were windy and cool with intermittent drizzle. We left Graskop and drove to Skukuza in Kruger National Park. As before, we had permission to collect, as long as we were accompanied by a ranger (Photo 10) with a gun. Traps were set and a black light placed near our cabin yielded one ceratocanthid, one trogid, two dynastids and a number of melolonthids.

After two days we moved to Satara, another camp in Kruger. Dung beetles were plentiful in both localities, and approximately 20 species were collected in elephant and rhino (Photo 11) dung! Cetonids were moderately common, many being collected at our fruit baits. I must admit that, at times, Anne and I enjoyed merely observing the animals and birds from the safety of the car—just like regular tourists!

Two days later we left Kruger and drove to the Gurnsey Farm

(Photo12), 15 km east of Klaserie. The “farm” was not a typical farm, more of a game farm (Photo 13) where different “game” could be shot during the hunting season - at a price which differed according to the trophy that was desired. Normally, no elephants were on the farm, which was adjacent to Kruger, but elephants and the occasional lion did get through the Park fence onto the farm. We no longer had a guard standing by with a gun, so we generally stayed clear of dense thickets. Fortunately, no one was bitten by anything larger than a mosquito during our two-week stay. We used the farm as a base and took frequent trips to localities along the escarpment (Photo 14) above the coastal plane. Several steep ravines which cut into the escarpment had remnants of wet forest (Photo 15) with some endemic scarabs. The forests were interesting habitats, but difficult to work in, made more so by being protected, some with permits required. We frequently emptied our traps at Graskop which continued to yield the occasional odd scarab. General collecting was great, only the lack of bolboceratines put a slight dent in my enthusiasm. At the Game Farm my FIT turned up one surprise (Photo 16) in the form of the largest Solifugae (“sun spider”) that I had ever seen. I had seen large ones in western Texas along the Rio Grande, but the African specimens were at least twice as large and even less friendly looking!

One of our excursions involved a day’s collecting along the top of



Photo 12: Our group at the Gurnsey Game Farm. From left to right: Stewart Peck, Clarke Scholtz, Bill Mason, Jarmila Peck, Eugene Munroe, Anne Howden and Mike Sanbourne.

the escarpment, including a place called “God’s Window”. Some readers may recall the excellent film called *The Gods Must Be Crazy* which involved the Bushmen and a Coke bottle. I would not mention this, except the film ended by the bottle being thrown off the escarpment at “God’s Window” (Photo 17). According to the film, the tribe thought the edge of the escarpment represented the end of the world, or at least the end of



Photo 13: The main building at the “Farm” including kitchen and outside ossuary.



Photo 14: The Escarpment as seen from the Gurnsey Game Farm.

their world! It was and is impressive and collecting on some flowering plants produced some different cetonids. Later, as often happened, we had a heavy rain which ended



Photo 15: Moist forest in one of the ravines in the Escarpment.

collecting for the day.

Our stay at the game farm ended on New Year's Day. Clarke said that our group of Canadians drank more beer than any group he had ever seen. Our excuse was that we came from a cold climate and needed extra liquid to cope with the heat! This explanation was greeted with considerable doubt.

On January 1 we drove back to Pretoria in the rain and fog. The next day I converted \$600 U.S. to 1,511 Rand to pay for our rented car which was obtained from one of the companies that was also in North America. Apparently they didn't like to handle cash, and I had a difficult time getting the clerk to put "Paid" on my bill. Fortunately, Clarke was with me because a month later I received a bill for the car rental. It took a photocopy of the bill and Clarke's address before I finally settled the matter. The following day we left at 5 PM for the flight back to Canada. Twelve hours later (5 AM South Africa time - 2 AM local time) we landed at the rather dingy, small airport on the Isle du Sal in the cluster of islands known as Cape Verde. We were supposed to just refuel and fly on to New York. Instead, we sat on the plane until about 8 AM local time when we were told that the plane needed a part which had to be flown in from Spain! We were also told that there was no way to make an international phone call from the airport, so people meeting our plane would be told of the delay in New York; as for Ottawa, we were out of luck! There was no large hotel that could house all the people from a full 747 and we

were not let off of the plane because there was also a Cuban Airline plane on the ground. I am still not sure why we were kept on the plane; did they think we might want to go to Cuba or start shooting at each other?

About 10 AM we were told that busses would take us to the nearby beach and we would then have lunch! It turned out to be an elaborate affair - tables with silverware furnished by the nearby, small beach hotel. About 2 or 3 PM we had a hot meal with wine and other drinks; later we learned that all supplies were brought from our plane. Anne and I took advantage of some free time to wander in the dunes to see what fauna might be there; we just happened to have several acetate vials with us - surprising, eh! The Isle lived up to its name - it was one of the most desolate places we had seen: volcanic ash and sand with a few tufts of vegetation scattered in low areas. There were no trees except those planted and watered: so much for the "verde". Our search for beetles yielded one tenebrionid and one coccinellid. We all returned to the plane at dusk, and finally departed for New York a short time later. There was no food on the plane, we had eaten it all on the beach! However, I was too tired to care and for the first time ever went to sleep shortly after take off and was awakened just before we landed in New York. At 1 AM local time we were put in a motel (after making some phone calls). The next day we were lucky to get a flight to Ottawa, arriving at 5 PM. The joys of air travel! "Time to spare, go by air".



Photo 16: A lovely Solifugae or "sun spider"; only a mother would say "handsome !" Photograph by Bruce Gill of a specimen he collected in central Africa.



Photo 17: God's Window on the Escarpment; bushmen supposedly considered it the end of the World!

Bug People IV

from the Secret Files of Henry Howden

How well do you know Canadian entomologists? This photograph was taken in 1985 at the Howden's former home at 23 Trillium Avenue in Ottawa.



Left: French Canadian Chrysomelid worker at the Canadian National Collection interested in chrysomelid feeding habits as well as their systematics.

Rear: Did his Master of Science degree on the biology of the New York Weevil (Ithyceridae); his Ph.D. was on Hymenoptera. For some time was curator of insects at the Lyman Entomological Museum, MacDonal College, Sainte Anne de Bellevue, Québec, part of McGill University. Died early in the nineties.

Wearing tie: Works on Staphylinidae at the Canadian National Collection, now retired but is still active and at the CNC most days.

Brown shirt: Mostly water beetles. University professor in Newfoundland; now retired and living in western Canada.

Right: Did his Ph.D. on Alleculidae (comb-clawed beetles) in Urbana, Illinois, then moved to work in the CNC (Ottawa) on staphylinids - very prolific. Retired early and moved to Kentucky to run the family farm.

Answers: Laurent LeSage (Chrysomelids), Mike Sanborne (Hymenoptera), Ales Smetana (Staphs), David Larson (water beetles), Milton Campbell (Staphs & Alleculids).