

COLOPTERUS POSTICUS (ERICHSON), A
NITIDULID BEETLE NEW TO THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

C. posticus (Erichson) is recorded from the United States for the first time. It has been collected from various fruits and flowers in Homestead, Florida.

RESUMEN

Colopterus posticus (Erichson) se encontró en los Estados Unidos por primera vez. Se ha recolectado en varias flores y frutas en Homestead, Florida.

An unfamiliar nitidulid beetle was collected on fallen loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica* Lindl) fruit in April, 1987 by J. Nagel of the University of Florida Tropical Research and Education Center, Homestead, FL. It was later identified (DHH) as *Colopterus posticus* (Erichson), a species not known to be established in the United States. Subsequently 7 additional specimens were collected at the research center on fallen loquat fruit and one on atemoya (*Annona squamosa* x *A. cherimola*) in April and 16 specimens on jack fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia* Forst) on June 6, 1987. Although other fruits (mango, many varieties of citrus, Barbados and Surinam cherries (*Malpighia* sp.), zapote (*Calocarpum sapota* Merr.) and other tropical species) were growing nearby, no *C. posticus* have been found on them. In June, 5 more specimens were collected from old flowers of (*Philodendron selloum* C. Koch) at the research center and another specimen was collected by R. M. Baranowski from old flowers of torch ginger (*Nicolaia elatior* (Jack) Horan) from a site 2 miles away. In March, 1988 another specimen was collected indicating that the species survived the winter and is established.

Colopterus posticus is easily recognized by the orange body with the apical half of the elytra black. No other North American species has similar coloration. All male fore tibiae are distinctly shaped (Fig. 1) although there is some variation in the angle and depth of the groove. The purpose of the odd-shaped tibiae is not known, but they may be used to grasp and hold the female during copulation. Females have normal fore tibiae.

Colopterus posticus is a tropical New World species ranging from Mexico to Brazil and Peru. The list of host associations is long, but it apparently is of little or no economic importance. It has been found on rotting oranges, mangos, papayas, cacao pods, cherimoya, bananas, lemons, grapefruit, pineapple, guava, avocado, limes, maize and legume pods as well as flowers of cactus (*Cereus* sp.) *Philodendron*, torch ginger, and *Enterolobium*. It has been intercepted at many U.S. ports on a variety of produce including *Monstera deliciosa* seeds, paprika seeds, cut flowers, *Alocasia* roots, papaya fruit, and bromeliads or orchids. These records are based on specimens in the collection of Lorin Gillogly, the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, and the D. H. Habeck collection.



Fig. 1. Fore tarsus of *C. posticus* male.

The arrival of *C. posticus* increases the described species of *Colopterus* in the U.S. to 10. Most of the species are fairly widespread but *C. posticus* is currently known only from the Homestead area of Florida.

Another tropical species, *Colopterus amputatus* (Erichson) (identified by L. Watrous) was established in Florida at least temporarily. *Colopterus amputatus*, widespread throughout the new world tropics, was collected March 7-8, 1919 on Marathon Key, Florida by E. A. Schwarz. To our knowledge these six adults and a nearly mature larva collected from a gumbo limbo stump, are the only specimens ever collected in the United States.

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