

**TAXONOMIC STATUS OF *ROPALOPUS LEDERERI*
(FAIRMAIRE) AND *ROPALOPUS WITTMERI* DEMELT WITH
NEW HOST PLANTS AND RECORDS FROM TURKEY
(CERAMBYCIDAE: CERAMBYCINAE)**

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ABSTRACT: Taxonomic status of *Ropalopus ledereri wittmeri* Demelt is discussed on the base of the original description and its distribution pattern in Turkey. As a result, *Ropalopus ledereri wittmeri* Demelt is upgraded to species level as *Ropalopus wittmeri* Demelt stat. nov.. In addition, *Ropalopus ledereri* (Fairmaire) is recorded for the first time from Antalya, Hatay, Konya and Mersin provinces, and hereby from Central Anatolian region of Turkey. Also, *Carpinus* sp. (Corylaceae) and *Ulmus* sp. (Ulmaceae) are given as new host plant species and families for *Ropalopus ledereri* (Fairmaire).

KEY WORDS: *Ropalopus ledereri*, *Ropalopus wittmeri*, taxonomic status, new records, new host plants, Turkey

Genus ***Ropalopus*** Mulsant, 1839: 40
[Type species. *Callidium clavipes* Fabricius, 1775]

Subgenus ***Ropalopus*** Mulsant, 1839: 40
[Type species. *Callidium clavipes* Fabricius, 1775]

Remarks on *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *wittmeri* Demelt, 1970: 31 stat. nov.

According to M. L. Danilevsky (2022), *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *ledereri* (Fairmaire, 1866: 269) includes two subspecies as the nominate subspecies known only from Asia (Israel, Jordan and Turkey), and *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *ledereri wittmeri* Demelt, 1970: 31 known only from Asia (Lebanon, Syria and Turkey). Therefore, both taxa have E-Mediterranean (Palaestino-Taurian) chorotype, and they are rare species. As seen above, both subspecies are represented in Turkey (Özdikmen, 2021).

Ropalopus ledereri was described by Fairmaire (1866: 269) from Giner (more likely İzmir province in West Anatolia of Turkey). The original description of Fairmaire (1866: 269) is below.

“*Rhopalopus Ledereri*. — Long. 15 mill. — *Elongatus*, *subdepressus*, *rufus*, *nitidiis*, *elytris virescenti-coeruleis*, *antennis corpore paulo longioribus*, *articulo 3° 4° dimidio fere longiore*, *prothorace piloso*, *lateribus angulatim rotundatis*, *postice sinuatis*, *leviter inaequali*, *sparsim punctato*, *elytris rugosis*, *basi truncatis*, *postice leviter dilatatis*.

Allongé, *un peu déprimé*, *d'un testacé rougeâtre brillant*, *élytres d'un bleu un peu verdâtre*, *métallique*. *Tête assez ponctuée*, *surtout à sa base*, *ayant entre les yeux un sillon assez bien marqué*. *Antennes un peu plus longues que le corps*, *ciliées de poils noirs*, *fins*,

peu serrés, disparaissant vers l'extrémité; les derniers articles comprimés vers les angles terminaux très-aigus; troisième article presque de moitié plus long que le quatrième. Corselet transversal, anguleusement arrondi au milieu des côtés qui sont sinués en arrière; surface un peu inégale, assez densément ponctuée par places; au-milieu une impression longitudinale lisse. Écusson petit, triangulaire, d'un métallique foncé. Élytres grandes, un peu élargies et rebordées dès le milieu, très-rugueusement ponctuées, plus fortement à la base avec deux ou trois lignes saillantes à peine marquées; base nettement tronquée; extrémité arrondie. Dessous glabre; prosternum un peu étroit. — Sur un Spartium, à Giner, extrêmement rare”.

After the original description, it has also been recorded only from two provinces in Turkey up to now. It was firstly reported by Adlbauer (1998) from Osmaniye province (Nurdağı pass) on *Quercus* sp. in Eastern Mediterranean region of Turkey, and then, it was recorded by Rejzek & Hoskovec (1999) from Adiyaman province (Kahta district, Karadut village, Nemrut Mt.) on *Quercus* sp. and *Prunus* sp. in Western part of South-Eastern Anatolian region of Turkey. There is no another record from Turkey to the present study. The taxon is also known by me from Antalya province in Western Mediterranean region of Turkey, Hatay and Mersin provinces in Eastern Mediterranean region of Turkey, and Konya province in South part of Central Anatolian region of Turkey. Therefore, it is the first record for Antalya, Hatay, Konya and Mersin provinces, and hereby for Central Anatolian region of Turkey according to the present study (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Provincial and regional distribution patterns of *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *ledereri* (Fairmaire, 1866) in Turkey [1) Marmara region, 2) Black Sea region, 3) Aegean region, 4) Central Anatolian region, 5) Eastern Anatolian region, 6) Mediterranean region, 7) South-Eastern Anatolian region].

On the other side, *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *ledereri* (Fairmaire, 1866) seems polyphagous on deciduous trees in the families Fagaceae and Rosaceae. Its known host plants are *Quercus calliprinos* Webb (= *coccifera* Linnaeus), *Quercus cerris pseudocerris* Boissier, *Quercus pseudocerris* Lojacono (Fagaceae), and *Crataegus* sp., *Prunus* sp. (Rosaceae) (Rejzek & Hoskovec, 1999; Sama, 2000; Sama & Rapuzzi, 2000; Sama et al., 2002; Tavakilian, 2022; Hoskovec et al., 2022). There is no another record to the present study. In addition, *Carpinus* sp. (Corylaceae) and *Ulmus* sp. (Ulmaceae) for this species are also known by me from Turkey. Therefore, these plant taxa are the new host plant species and families for this species according to the present study.

Ropalopus ledereri wittmeri was described by Demelt (1970: 31) from Osmaniye province in Eastern Mediterranean region of Turkey. The original description of Demelt (1970: 31) and original drawing of this taxon (Fig. 2) are below.

“Ropalopus ledereri Frm. ssp. *wittmeri* nov. spec. (Abb. 2a)

Haldschild grob, aber nicht sehr dicht und nicht runzelig punktiert, Flügeldeckenbasis ohne abstehende Behaarung. Schwarz, nur der Kopf, Teile des 1. Fühlergliedes, die Scheibe des Halsschildes, die Schenkel bis auf die Schenkelspitzen (1/5) und die letzten Abdominalsegmente rot!

Flügeldecken dunkelblau, metallisch, an der Basis grob-runzelig punktiert, gegen die Spitze viel feiner, runzelig punktiert”.



Figure 2. The original drawing of *Ropalopus wittmeri* Demelt, 1970 (after Demelt, 1970).

After the original description, the original record was repeated by Özdikmen (2012, 2014). There is no another record from Turkey. Therefore, it has been known only from the type locality for Turkey up to now (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. Provincial and regional distribution patterns of *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *wittmeri* Demelt, 1970 in Turkey [1) Marmara region, 2) Black Sea region, 3) Aegean region, 4) Central Anatolian region, 5) Eastern Anatolian region, 6) Mediterranean region, 7) South-Eastern Anatolian region].

On the other side, *Ropalopus* (s.str.) *wittmeri* Demelt, 1970 seems monophagous on deciduous trees in the family Fagaceae. Its known host plants are *Quercus calliprinos* Webb (= *coccifera* Linnaeus) and *Quercus cerris* Linnaeus (Fagaceae) (Sama et al., 2010; Nemeth et al., 2019; Tavakilian, 2022; Hoskovec et al., 2022).

Consequently, in my opinion, these taxa seem sufficiently different from each other according to their original descriptions. Besides, the distribution patterns of these taxa are overlapped clearly at least in Turkey. So the status is unavailable to the rule of allopatric distribution of subspecies. Both taxa have E-Mediterranean (Palaestino-Taurian) chorotype. Therefore, I propose here to consider them as separate species. Significant differences only between these taxa are presented below.

--. Pronotum completely red; legs completely red; antennae longer, a little longer than the body in male; elytra of a slightly greenish blue.....
.....***Ropalopus* (s.str.) *ledereri* (Fairmaire, 1866)**

--. Pronotum black with largely red on disc; the femora red up to the black apical parts (1/5); antennae smaller, never longer than the body in male; elytra dark blue.....***Ropalopus* (s.str.) *wittmeri* Demelt, 1970 stat. nov.**

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