

ROPALOPUS CRETICUS SP. NOV. AND ROPALOPUS INSUBRICUS OLYMPICUS SSP. NOV. (COLEOPTERA: CERAMBYCIDAE) FROM GREECE

| **Janis Vartanis*** |

* CZ – 688 01 Uherský Brod – Luhanova 1825, CZECH REPUBLIC. E-mails:
janisvartanis@seznam.cz / giannisiv@seznam.cz

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ABSTRACT: Two new species-group taxa from the genus *Ropalopus* Mulsant, 1839, species *Ropalopus creticus* sp. nov., from Greece - Créta island and the subspecies *Ropalopus insubricus olympicus* ssp. nov., from Greece - Olympos Mt., were compared with all species of the genus, *Ropalopus insubricus insubricus* Germar, 1824 / *Ropalopus insubricus gallicus* Vartanis, 2018 / *Ropalopus insubricus fischeri* Krynicki, 1829 / *Ropalopus boreki* Rapuzzi, 2017 / *Ropalopus carolini* Vartanis & Borek, 2019 / *Ropalopus siculus* Stierlin, 1864 / *Ropalopus ungaricus* Herbst, 1784 / *Ropalopus lederi* Ganglbauer, 1882 / *Ropalopus hanae* Sama & Rejzek, 2002 / *Ropalopus clavipes* Fabricius, 1775 and *Ropalopus ungaricus ossae* Karpinski & Kruselnicki, 2020.

KEY WORDS: Coleoptera, Cerambycidae, Cerambycinae, *Ropalopus*, new species and subspecies, Greece

***Ropalopus creticus* sp. nov.**

Ropalopus creticus, (plate number 1), a new species of the genus *Ropalopus* Mulsant, 1839 from South-Eastern Europe (Greece) was found on the probably food plant *Platanus orientalis*, a plant in the western part of the island of Crete, area of Chania, in the village of Vlatos (χωριο Βλάτος) at altitude above sea level 300 - 400 m, on solitary trees. So far, it is an endemic species within the entire genus, where the body size of males and females varies between 18 and 22 mm.

The new species was compared with all species of the genus known from Greece, the Balkans and from various destinations in Europe, including species from Turkey and the Far East, from which it can be distinguished by its morphological characters, as described below. The morphological characters are visible to the naked eye, including magnifying optics.

HOLOTYPE: male – Greece, Creta Isl. / Chania reg.- Vlatos 300 – 400 m, 23.VI. 2015, lgt. J. Vartanis.

PARATYPES: 3 x males / 2x females – Greece, Creta Isl. / Chania reg. – Vlatos 300 – 400 m, 23. VI. 2015, lgt. J. Vartanis. 2x males – Greece, Creta / Chania reg. – Apopigadi , 30. VI. 2018, lgt. G. Mirotýs. 1x male / 2x females – Greece, Creta / Chania reg. – Elos, 25. VI. 2020, lgt. K. Stergiou.

Length: Males – 18 - 21 mm, females – 19 – 22 mm.

Body: Completely black, with a medium luster, including legs, antenna and pronotum dark brown red and elytra with a pronounced metallic green luster and color, overall very elongated, without significant dilatation in both males and females.

Head: Coarsely and densely wrinkled, dotted, without a distinct median furrow on the crown.

Antennae: Brownish red, inner side of antennomeres 3 - 5 with short, erect setae. Antennomeres are toothed, from 3 - 7 drawn out into a sharp spine, unlike other species, which are without conspicuously expanded teeth on the inner and outer sides (see photo). The antennae are as long as the body in males, and slightly exceed them in females reaching half the length of the body.

Pronotum: Dark brown-red, the entire surface coarsely and densely wrinkled, punctate, without any smooth surface on its top, a very significant feature from other species of the whole "*insubricus*" group (see table number 2). Pronotum wider than head, laterally arched. Its upper surface without erect setae.

Scutellum: Metallic green, coarsely punctate, with broadly rounded apex.

Elytra: Metallic green-blue all over, with a metallic sheen. Very long, at least 2 - 2.2 times longer than wide at the root (at the humerus). Front half of elytra wrinkled, coarsely punctate and very sparsely setate. Posterior half finely and densely dotted, with a denser, recumbent set. Elytra greatly expanded towards the apex, but not as markedly as in other species. Elytral apex rounded.

Abdominal sternites: With fine and decumbent setae in both males and females, setae pointing in one direction.

Legs: Black, shiny, with a very sparse and close set, especially on the tibiae.

Extension of *Ropalopus* species:

I will describe the occurrence of all the species that I have in my collection and put them into groups as I see it, since there have been various works on the genus *Ropalopus* where the nomenclature is wrong.

The first "*insubricus*" species group:

1 – *Ropalopus insubricus insubricus* Germar, 1824, - Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria - the type species of the group, which occurs in the central Balkans.

2 – *Ropalopus insubricus gallicus* Vartanis, 2018, - France - this species is still endemic to France, but it is not excluded that it can also occur in the surrounding destinations. This is a smaller species with different characteristics for this species (see my Vartanis description from 2018).

3 – *Ropalopus insubricus fischeri* Krynicki, 1829, – Ukraina, Russia.

4 – *Ropalopus insubricus olympicus* ssp. nov., - Greece / Olympos Mt., - a completely new subspecies for the above group, which is also described below. It is a smaller species, with characteristic features, moreover endemic to Greece, where until then no species of the "*insubricus*" group had been found in Greece. The only documented pieces from the Olympos Mountains.

I would base the second group on the species "*siculus*" and species similar to it, which show similar characteristics and mainly do not show a mirror-like smooth surface on the pronotum. He shows this different character in his book *Cerambycidae-Bense* (1995), in his key of descriptive species, of the genus *Ropalopus* Mulsant, 1839, therefore these separate species below cannot be included in the subspecies "*ungaricus*". And that is only one distinctive sign, there are many different signs.

5 – *Ropalopus boreki* Rapuzzi, 2017, - Greece, Peloponnisos - an endemic species for Greece and so far occurring only on the Peloponnese peninsula.

6 – *Ropalopus carolini* Vartanis & Borek, 2019, - Greece, Peloponnisos - an endemic species for Greece and so far occurring only on the Peloponnese peninsula. Description of the species mentioned here in my personal work from 2019 in collaboration with my Polish colleague Borek.

7 – *Ropalopus lederi* Ganglbauer, 1882, - Armenia, Georgia, Turkey, Azerbaijan.

8 – *Ropalopus hanae* Sama & Rejzek, 2002, - Turkey.

9 – *Ropalopus siculus* Stierlin, 1864, - Italy - Sicilia Isl., Greece – Thessaly prov., - I deliberately left this species at the end of this group for certain questionable reasons, since the pieces I have in my collection both from the island of Sicily and from Greece from the Thessaly area are identical. This knowledge is also shared by my colleagues from Greece who live in this area. Moreover, I am convinced that this species was introduced to Sicily from Greece, because the island of Sicily was inhabited by Greeks and wood was transported from Greece to Sicily since ancient times. That's why I didn't understand the description from 2020, the Poles and additionally described the species as *Ropalopus ungaricus ossae* Karpinski & Kruszelnicki, 2020?

10 – *Ropalopus ungaricus ossae* Karpinski & Kruszelnicki, 2020, - I included this species in the whole group of the genus *Ropalopus*, but I don't understand what this subspecies shows for the characters that characterize it as a subspecies "*ungaricus*"! The species *R. ungaricus* shows these very characteristic features, namely that the elytron in the basal part has net-like, irregular elevations and the pronotum on the upper surface is completely smooth, almost without dots, sharply demarcated on the sides. None of the above-mentioned species have these features.

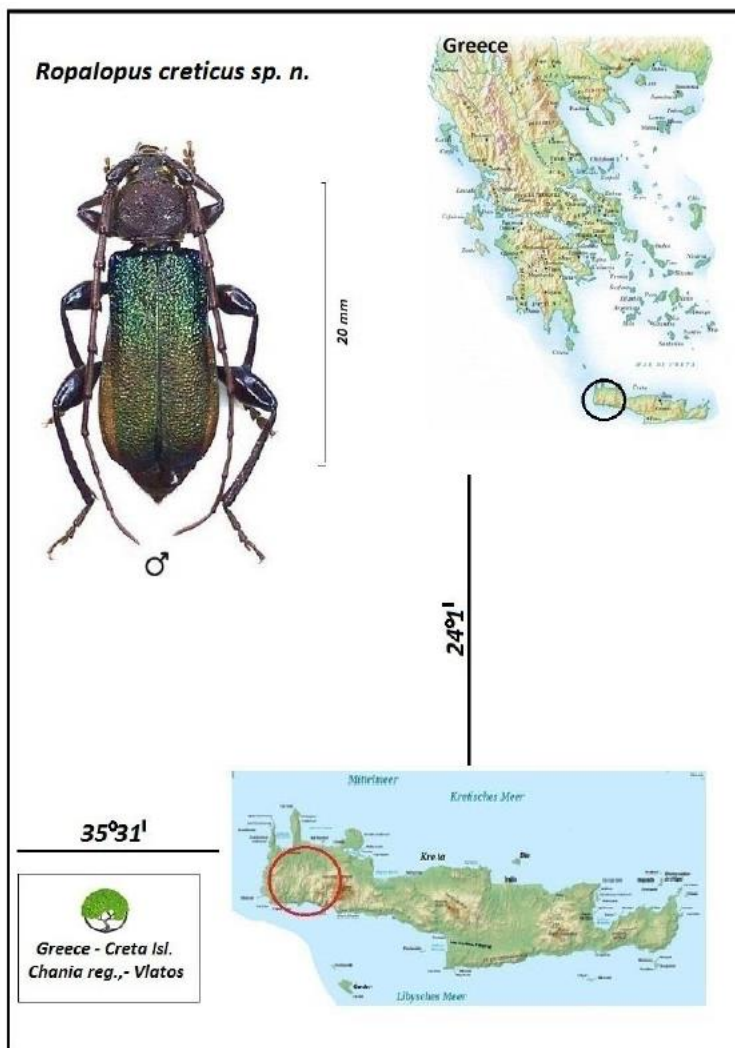
11 – *Ropalopus ungaricus ungaricus* Herbst, 1784, - Europa, this species is found in several destinations in Europe, but it is still a rarer species. The characteristic features were mentioned above.

12 – *Ropalopus clavipes* Fabricius, 1775, - Europa, this species is found in several destinations in Europe, and mainly attacks fruit trees in large quantities, where the wood can be completely dry.

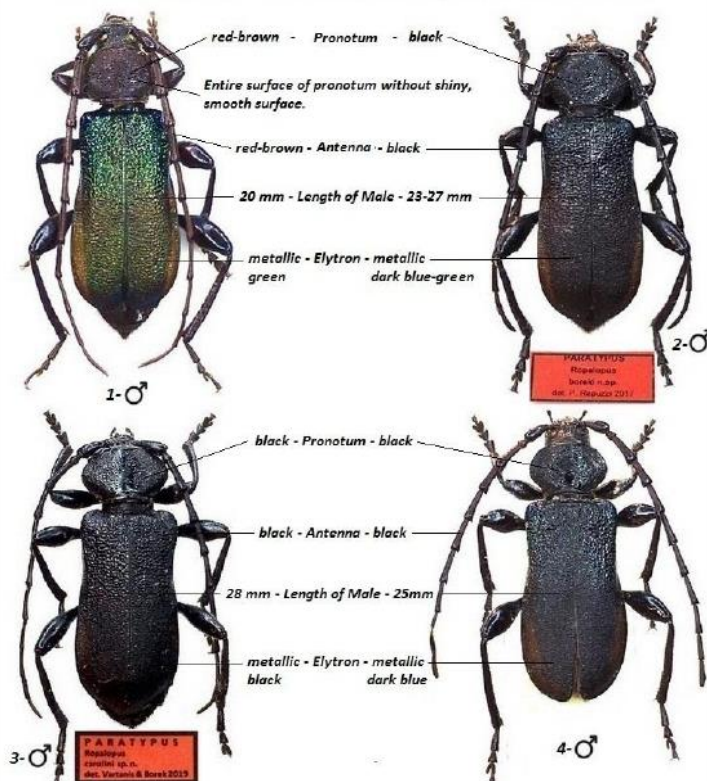
13 – *Ropalopus creticus* sp. nov., - the new species has very distinctive characters and I personally consider it one of the nicest species of *Ropalopus*. It has very different characters from the *insubricus* group, mainly in the pronotum and antennae (see table number 2).

Differential diagnosis: a new species was discovered in the western part of the island of Crete and its food and host plant is *Platanus orientalis*. It has been compared above with all species of the genus *Ropalopus* and its characteristic features are already visible to the naked eye, moreover, a species from the group "*insubricus*" or similar species has never been confirmed on the island of Crete.

Etymology: A new species from Greece, from the island of Crete, *Ropalopus creticus* sp. n., got its specific name after the beautiful island of Crete (Κρήτη), which is the largest Greek island and the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean.



***Ropalopus* genus - endemic species, mainland Greece.**



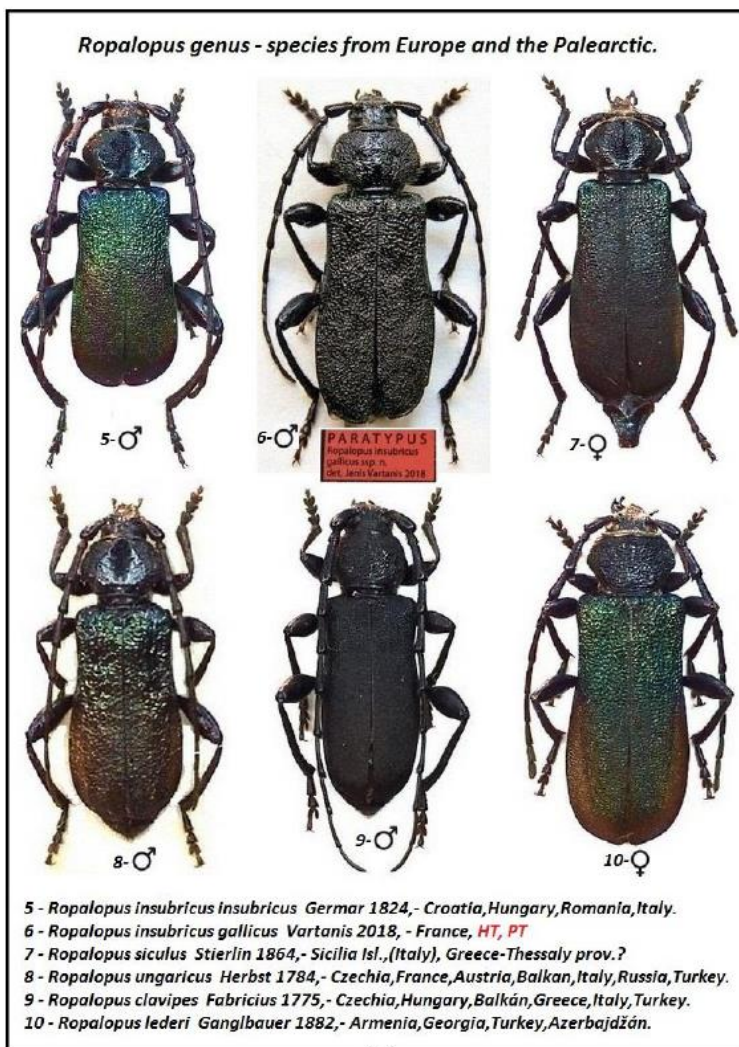
1 - *Ropalopus creticus* sp. n., - Greece, Créta Isl., Chania reg.- Vlatos chorio.

2 - *Ropalopus boreki* Rapuzzi 2017 - Greece, Peloponnisos - **PT**

3 - *Ropalopus carolini* Vartanlis & Borek 2019 - Greece, Peloponnisos - **HT, PT**

4 - *Ropalopus ungaricus ossae* Karpinski & Kruszelnicki 2020 - Greece, Thessaly reg.

HT, PT - Holotypus, Paratypus - in my collection



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***Ropalopus insubricus olympicus* ssp. nov.**

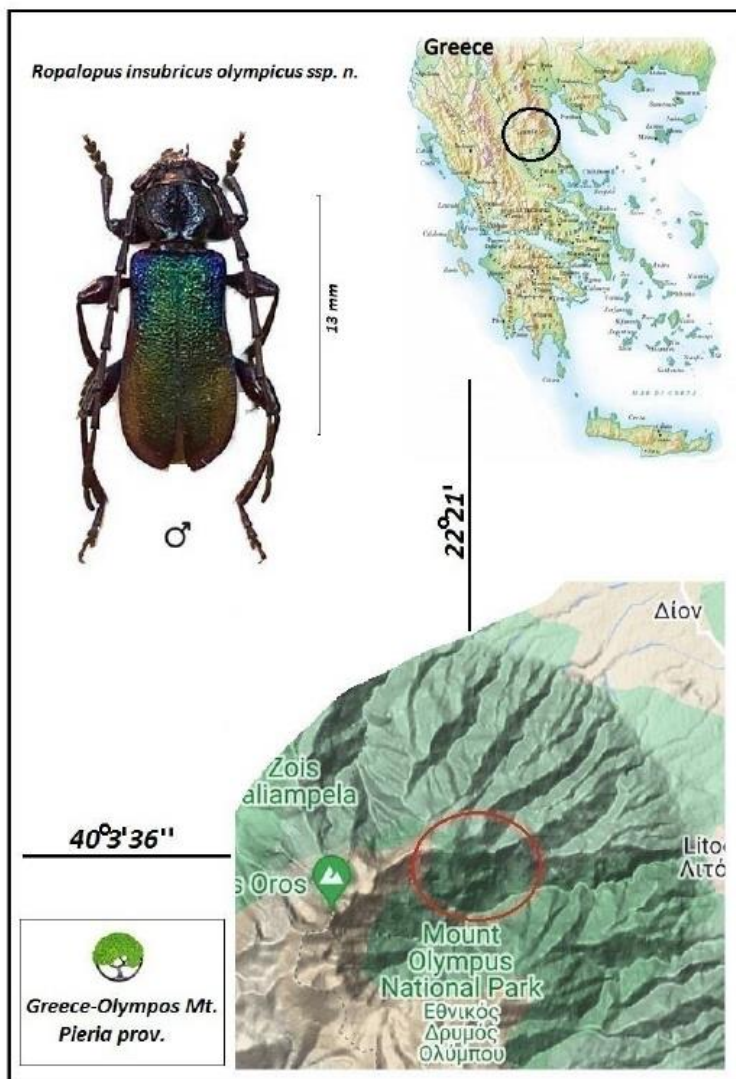
Ropalopus insubricus olympicus, a new subspecies of the genus *Ropalopus* Mulsant, 1839 from South-Eastern Europe (Greece) was found in flight and on *Fagus*, Mount Olympus, Pieria area at an altitude of 700 - 1000 m above sea level, in a beech forest. So far, it is an endemic species within the entire genus, where the body size of males and females varies between 13 and 15 mm.

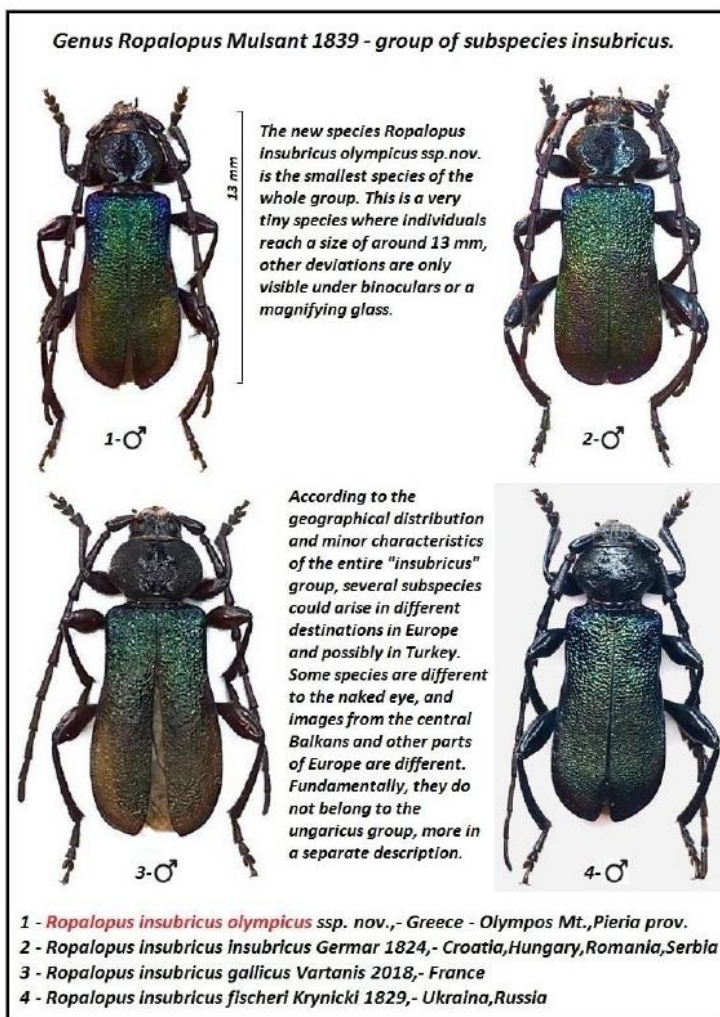
The new subspecies was compared with all species of the genus known from Greece and/or the entire Balkans or from Italy, from which it can be distinguished by its morphological characters, as described below.

HOLOTYPE: male – Greece, Olympos Mt., Pieria prov., 700 - 1000 m, 2.VII. 2014 lgt. J. Vartanis.

PARATYPES: 5 x males & 3 x females – Greece, Olympos Mt., Pieria prov., 700 – 1000 m, 2. VII. 2014 lgt. J. Vartanis. 2x males & 2x females-GR,Olympos Mt., 30.VI.2023 lgt. P. & J. Vartanis.

Length: Males – 13 - 14 mm, females – 14 - 15 mm.





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Body black and total length of male and female very tiny, elytron metallic green-blue, almost regularly wrinkled, basally with wrinkles becoming granular, never longitudinal or irregular impressions. Antennae in males slightly exceed the length of the body, in females they reach half of the elytron. On average with the classic species „*insubricus insubricus*“ the new species is significantly smaller and based on / shoulder width the elytron is shorter in length.

The geographical distribution of the new species is so far in the Olympus Mountains - Greece, where the occurrence of any *insubricus* species has not yet been confirmed (see table number 4). In comparison with the other species of the entire "*insubricus*" group, different characters are visible (see table number 5).

Differential diagnosis: the new species was compared with all the species of the genus *Ropalopus*, which are listed above, and according to the morphological characters, it belongs to the group of the new subspecies *insubricus*, which has not yet been confirmed in Greece. This is the smallest species of the whole group.

Etymology: A new subspecies *R. insubricus olympicus*, from Greece, named after the Olympos mountain range. The highest mountain of the mountain range is Mytikas. It rises above the Gulf of Thessaloniki between the valleys of the Pinios and Aliákmon rivers. In Greek mythology, it is often referred to as the seat of the gods.

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