

**Revision of Afrotropical species
of the *Philonthus peripateticus* species group
(Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Philonthina)**

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Abstract. The *Philonthus peripateticus* species group (i.e., subgenus *Raucalius* sensu Tottenham, 1949) of the genus *Philonthus* Stephens, 1829 (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae) comprising seven species and one subspecies, is revised. Two new species are described: *Philonthus colius* sp. nov. and *P. dendroaspis* sp. nov. (both from Zambia); five species and one subspecies are redescribed: *P. katan-gaensis* Lévassieur, 1967, *P. lamtoensis lamtoensis* Lévassieur, 1967, *P. lamtoensis shamnesis* Hromádka, 2005, *P. madianus* Bernhauer, 1936, *P. peripateticus* Tottenham, 1949, and *P. rugulipennis* Tottenham, 1949. The male genitalia of all species are illustrated. A key to species of the *Philonthus peripateticus* species group is provided.

Key words. Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Philonthina, *Philonthus peripateticus* species group, taxonomy, new species, key, Afrotropical region

Introduction

When TOTTENHAM (1949) described the subgenus *Raucalius* Tottenham, 1949, of the genus *Philonthus* Stephens, 1829, he justified the erection of the subgenus as follows: 'In view of the peculiar structure of the aedeagus in this and preceding species, a peculiarity which is accompanied by similar differences in sculpture from the normal, I propose for these species a new subgenus *Raucalius* with *P. peripateticus* Tottenham, 1949 as its type.' These arguments, however, are hardly sufficient to support a genus group name in a modern taxonomic sense. This is particularly true for a large genus such as *Philonthus* where the intraspecific relationships are only very marginally understood as yet from a phylogenetic point of view. I will not synonymize the subgeneric name but I will follow the current concept of using species groups instead. Therefore, I establish the *P. peripateticus* group (utilizing the name of the type species of Tottenham's subgenus) for all species formerly combined in the subgenus