

**A revision of the Afrotropical species
of the *Philonthus arrowianus* species group
(Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Philonthina)**

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Abstract. The *Philonthus arrowianus* species group of the genus *Philonthus* Stephens, 1829 is defined and six species included in it. Two species are described as new: *Philonthus currax* sp. nov. from Gabon and *Philonthus galago* sp. nov. from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia, Malawi and the Republic of South Africa. Four species are redescribed: *P. arrowianus* Bernhauer, 1931 (Ethiopia), *P. chappuisi* Bernhauer, 1939 (Kenya), *P. meges* Tottenham, 1939 (Ethiopia) and *P. trilobatus* Tottenham, 1949 (Democratic Republic of the Congo). All species of the *P. arrowianus* species group are keyed and the aedeagi and relevant morphological characters of all species are figured. A lectotype of *P. arrowianus* is designated.

Key words. Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Philonthina, *Philonthus arrowianus* species group, taxonomy, new species, key, Afrotropical Region

Introduction

Philonthus Stephens, 1829 is the largest genus of the subtribe Philonthina, currently containing more than 1,280 species that occur in all zoogeographical regions. It is represented in the Afrotropical Region by approximately 330 known species. Members of this genus are typical predators which pursue tiny insects and larvae. They inhabit various kinds of decaying organic matter, such as rotting plant material and animal remains, manure and excrements, but they are also found in moss. Many species are typical inhabitants of riversides and some live exclusively in the nests of birds or the burrows of small mammals.

TOTTENHAM (1962) classified some Afrotropical *Philonthus* species in five species groups: *P. caffer*, *P. circumcinctus*, *P. peliomerus*, *P. rudipennis* and *P. xanthorhapis-discoideus* species groups. HROMÁDKA (2008a,b,c, 2009a,b,c) introduced additional new species groups (*P. turbidus* group, *P. peripateticus* group, *P. abyssinus* group and *P. nigriceps* group), revised the representatives of *P. caffer* group and transferred some *Philonthus* species into the genus *Mentophilonthus* Levasseur, 1966.