

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

THE LARVA OF *THANATOPHILUS TRITUBERCULATUS* (KIRBY)
(COLEOPTERA: SILPHIDAE)

Anderson and Peck (1985), in a review of the Silphidae of Canada and Alaska, presented keys for the identification of larvae of all North American genera and of species for which larvae were known. For the genus *Thanatophilus* only larvae of *T. lapponicus* (Herbst) and *T. coloradensis* (Wickham) were available for inclusion at that time. Although larvae and adults of *T. trituberculatus* (Kirby) had been collected under washed-up detritus along lake margins, the larvae were not available for study.

Recently, B. F. and J. L. Carr of Calgary, Alberta, collected six larvae associated with *T. trituberculatus* adults under debris along the shore of Troy Lake, Manitoba (Township 81, Range 2, East 1st. Meridian) on 10.vii.85. Unlike most other silphids, both larvae and adults of this species do not appear to be associated with vertebrate carrion, but rather with various types of decaying organic debris washed up on lake shores. Examination of these larvae (retained in my collection) revealed characters useful for their separation from *T. lapponicus* and *T. coloradensis*. The following couplet can be inserted at the beginning of the key to species of known larvae of *Thanatophilus* on p. 41 of Anderson and Peck (1985):

Urogomphus 2.5 to 3.0 times length of abdominal segment 10; first segment
approximately 1.5 times length of second segment *T. trituberculatus* (Kirby)
Urogomphus less than 2 times length of abdominal segment 10; first segment 2
to 3 times length of second segment 1

No changes are required in the key to genera of larval Silphinae in Anderson and Peck (1985). Larvae of an unidentified North American species of *Thanatophilus* were known and provisions made in the key to accommodate these individuals allow for reliable placement of *T. trituberculatus* in the genus *Thanatophilus*. Although it is likely that these latter unidentified individuals are *T. trituberculatus*, based on the character states of the urogomphus given above, the structural similarity of adults of *T. trituberculatus* and *T. sagax* (Mannerheim) cautions that larvae of the two species may likewise be very similar.

LITERATURE CITED

- ANDERSON, R. S., AND S. B. PECK. 1985. The carrion beetles of Canada and Alaska. Coleoptera: Silphidae and Agyrtidae. The insects and arachnids of Canada. Part 13. Agriculture Canada, Ottawa. 121 pp.

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