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LONGITARSUS MELANURUS (COLEOPTERA: CHRYSOMELIDAE) REPRODUCES ON ONOSMODIUM MOLLE (BORAGINACEAE)

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Longitarsus melanurus (Melsheimer) was first associated with *Onosmodium* Michx. by Popenoe (1877) in Kansas where the sole species is *O. molle* Michx. (Great Plains Flora Assn. 1986). Recent field observations over several years showed that adults of *L. melanurus* feed on leaves of *O. molle* in Wisconsin, where these beetles were collected at 43 of the 59 sites where *O. molle* was found growing naturally (Williams 1996).

On several occasions, *L. melanurus* adults were found feeding on leaves of *Cynoglossum officinale* L. (Boraginaceae) at sites where *O. molle* also occurred (Williams 1996). These beetles were neither observed at these sites on foliage of several native borages: *Lithospermum incisum* Lehm. (31 sites), *L. canescens* (Michx.) Lehm. (30 sites), *L. carolinense* (Walter) MacMillan (1 site) and *Hackelia virginiana* (L.) I. M. Johnston (15 sites) nor were they seen on the exotics *Lappula squarrosa* (Retz.) Dumort (2 sites) and *Echium vulgare* L. (1 site) (Williams 1996). Furth (1994) reported *L. melanurus* using *E. vulgare* in Massachusetts and New York.

A simple experiment was done to test whether or not *L. melanurus* would reproduce on *O. molle*. Tiny, wild, bare rooted plants were potted and tightly caged. These were maintained free of other plants and without evidence *of L. melanurus* being present for more than a year. On 11 June 1996, 37 adults collected on *O. molle* in the wild that same day were introduced. Adults were removed between 27 and 29 June. The caged plants did not again harbor adults until 7 August. Between 7 August and 24 September 1996, 102 adults were removed from these plants. This shows that *L. melanurus* can reproduce on *O. molle*, the sole native species on which adults have been reported to feed (Popenoe 1877, Furth 1994, Williams 1996).

Specimens of *L. melanurus* were donated to the Insect Research Collection of the Entomology Department, University of Wisconsin - Madison. Plant nomenclature herein follows Gleason and Cronquist (1991).

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