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Small carrion beetles (Coleoptera, Leiodidae, Cholevinae) of Malta

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Very little information is available on the small carrion beetles of Malta. CAMERON & CARUANA GATTO (1907) listed two species, *Catops morio* (Fabricius, 1787) and *Ptomophagus* [sic!] *sericatus* (Chaudoir, 1845). LUIGIONI (1929) repeated the above mentioned records as occurring in Malta. JEANNEL (1936) mentioned that the records of *P. sericatus* from Sicily and Malta (LUIGIONI, 1929) should belong to *P. tenuicornis mauritanicus* Jeannel, 1934. In the present contribution we provide records of both recently collected and historical material of Cholevinae from Malta and confirm the presence of *P. tenuicornis mauritanicus* in Malta which was previously misidentified as *P. (P.) sericatus*. We also report the presence of a new record, *Catops coracinus* Kellner, 1846 which should replace the old record of *C. morio*, based on re-examination of historical material from Malta. The distribution of both *Catops coracinus* and *Ptomophagus tenuicornis mauritanicus* in the Maltese Islands is provided in figure 1. Material has been deposited in the following institutions and private collections: BMNH – Natural History Museum, London, UK (Maxwell V.L. Barclay); CDM – private collection, D. Mifsud, Malta; CJR – private collection, J. Růžička, Praha, Czech Republic.

Catops coracinus Kellner, 1846

Material examined: Malta, G.C. Champion coll., B.M. 1927-409, without date, 1 ♂ (BMNH); Malta, Zejtun [ca. 35°51'N 14°32'E], 13.iv.1989, 1 ♀, D. Mifsud leg. (CDM); Buskett [ca. 35°52'N 14°24'E], 25.i.1996, 1 ♂, D. Mifsud leg. (CDM); St. Thomas Bay, Tal-Munxar [ca. 35°51'N 14°34'E], 6.iv.2003, 1 ♀, D. Mifsud leg. (CDM).

New record for Malta. A widely distributed species in the Palaearctic Region, recorded from most European countries, North Africa (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) and extending easterly to Israel, Mongolia, Turkey and western Siberia (PERREAU, 2015). The possibility that the record of *Catops morio* from Malta by CAMERON & CARUANA GATTO (1907) is incorrect and should refer to this species is confirmed by re-examination of a historical specimen from BMNH.

Ptomophagus (Ptomophagus) tenuicornis mauritanicus Jeannel, 1934

Material examined: Malta, 8081 [=May, 1903, *Ptomophagus sericatus* Ch., Mansel det., stone], M. Cameron [leg.], B.M. 1936-555, 1 ♂ (BMNH); South of Dingli Cliffs [ca. 35°51'N 14°24'E], 5.iv.1993, 1 ♂, rock, dry grass, leg. P. Sprick (CDM); Tal-Munxar, St. Thomas Bay [ca. 35°51'N 14°34'E], 18.iii.1996, 3 ♂♂ & 2 ♀♀ (CDM, CJR); Bidnija [ca. 35°56'N 14°24'E], 13.i.1999, 1 ♂ (CDM).

Species known from Pyrenean Peninsula, North Africa and southern Italy. *P. t. mauritanicus* is known from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt (JEANNEL, 1936), Sicily (JEANNEL, 1936; ANGELINI *et al.*, 1995). The material cited by CAMERON & CARUANA GATTO (1907) as *P. sericatus* was available

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for the present work and we could confirm that this was misidentified and should refer to *P. t. mauritanicus* as was already pointed out by JEANNEL (1936).

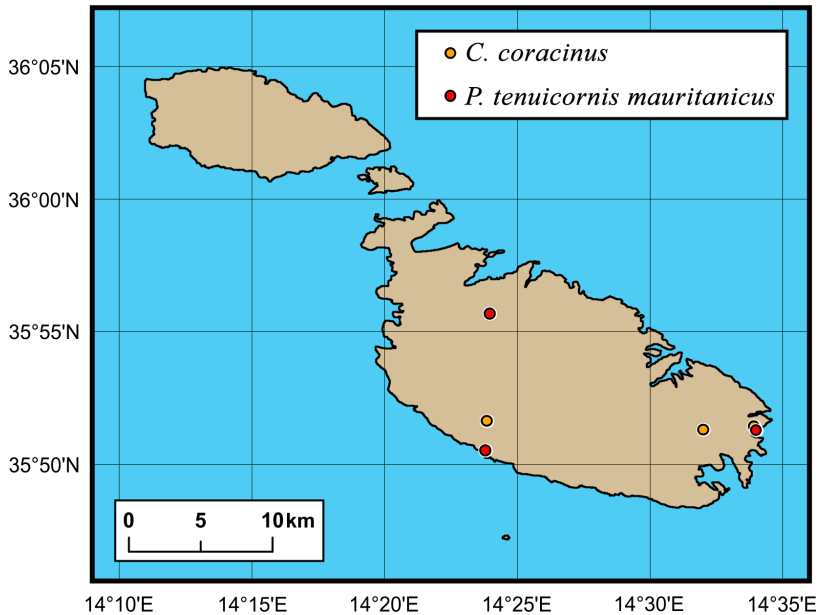


Figure 1: Known distribution of *Catops coracinus* and *Ptomaphagus (Ptomaphagus) tenuicornis mauritanicus* in the Maltese Islands.

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