#### THE ELATERIDAE OF WISCONSIN<sup>1</sup>

# I. A LIST OF THE SPECIES FOUND IN WISCONSIN AND KEYS TO THE IDENTIFICATION OF GENERA OF ADULTS AND LARVAE

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The click beetles and wireworms which make up the family Elateridae are familiar insects to a large part of the rural population of Wisconsin. In most cases the adult and larvae are not recognized as different stages of the same insect, but each claims attention in its own way. The adults are known for their ability, when placed on their backs, to spring into the air with an audible click which has earned them their common name. On the other hand, the larvae are best known as destroyers of newly planted corn and potatoes and are the cause of replanting or abandonment of certain fields.

Previous published work on the Elateridae in Wisconsin is scanty and consists mainly of short notes in Extension publications or in the Annual Reports of the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station.

Similar work on the Elateridae of other states has been done in Indiana by Blatchley (1910), in Maine by Hawkins (1936), in Pennsylvania by Thomas (1941), in New York by Dietrich (1945), in South Dakota by Severin (1949) and in Georgia by Fattig (1951).

The purpose in making the present study was twofold. The first objective was to provide a means of recognizing adult and larval Elaterids occurring in Wisconsin. This includes (1) keys constructed for the identification of genera and species by means of both adult and larval characteristics and (2) descriptions of the adults and larvae of each species. An attempt has been made to present this information in a form that will be equally acceptable to taxonomist, student, and fieldman. The second aim was to provide information about the biology of the individual species since such knowledge is fundamental to the development of suitable con-

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trol procedures and to a clear understanding of the true relationships of the accepted taxonomic groups. Information on the biology of these insects has been obtained through observations in the field, by rearing of the immature forms and from published reports of other workers.

The first section of this report deals mainly with recognition of the genera. Discussion of specific characteristics and biology is to be taken up in subsequent sections.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ELATERIDAE

The adult click beetles vary greatly in size but are quite constant in general shape, their elongate form and the often prolonged hind angles of the pronotum making them easily recognizable. The elytra are rigidly constructed, narrowing gradually posteriorly, and the hind wings are well developed. The tarsi and abdomen are five segmented and there is always present a prosternal prolongation or process which fits into a cavity in the mesosternum. Adult members of this family differ from those of other closely related families which also possess a prosternal prolongation and mesosternal groove in that the Elaterids have the prothorax loosely joined to the mesothorax. This permits the movement necessary for making the snapping leap into the air when the beetles are placed on their backs.

The antennae are more or less serrate and are generally 11-segmented; in a few genera a 12th segment may be present. The mouthparts are adapted for chewing, with the mandibles quite small and retracted.

The legs are slender; the fore coxae are spherical with the cavithe open behind, while the hind coxae are transverse and contiguous.

Wireworms also vary considerably in size but most species are readily recognized by their hard, shining bodies varying in color from pale yellow to dark red-brown and bearing only three pairs of five-segmented thoracic legs. The labrum is fused to the clypeus and forms a toothlike projection or projections known as the nasale. The clypeus is not distinctly delimited posteriorly and the fronto-clypeal area is usually lyre-shaped and quite characteristic of the family.

The abdomen is apparently nine- but actually ten-segmented, the tenth segment appearing as a projection from the ventral surface of the ninth and bearing the anus. The ninth segment is extremely variable in shape; sometimes with horn-like terminal processes known as urogomphi surrounding a caudal notch.

Elaterid eggs are small, generally less than 0.5 mm. in diameter, and almost spherical. They are usually white, sometimes with a bluish or yellow tinge.

The pupae are dull yellow to white and have conspicuous spinelike processes at the anterior angles of the prothorax.

#### SPECIES OF ELATERIDAE FOUND IN WISCONSIN

The specimens studied include representatives in the collection of The United States National Museum, the Milwaukee Public Museum, the William S. Marshall collection and the collection of the Department of Entomology at the University of Wisconsin, those in the author's collection, and larval specimens belonging to Dr. H. H. Jewett. In addition, a large number of specimens collected by Dr. R. D. Shenefelt and associates, was available for study. The literature was reviewed for references to the occurrence or possible occurrence of various species in Wisconsin or neighboring states.

Studies of Elaterid larvae by Hyslop (1917), Glen et al (1943), Van Emden (1945), Jewett (1946) and Glen (1950) provided information essential to an understanding of the characteristics of

the genera occurring in Wisconsin.

Following is a list of the species occurring or probably occurring in Wisconsin, the letter "P" after a name indicating probable, though unreported occurrence:

#### LACON Castelnau

L. auroratus (Say)

L. avitus (Say)

L. brevicornis (Lec.)

L. discoideus (Web.)

L. marmoratus (Fab.)

L. obtectus (Say)

#### COLAULON Arnett

C. rectangularis (Say)

#### ALAUS Eschscholtz

A. myops (Fab.)

A. oculatus (L.)

#### CONODERUS Eschscholtz

C. auritus (Hbst.)

C. vespertinus (Fab.)

## DRASTERIUS Eschscholtz

D. dorsalis (Say)

## PITYOBIUS Leconte

P. anguinus (Lec.)

#### LIMONIUS Eschecholtz

L. aeger Lec.

L. anceps Lec.

L. aurifer Lec.

L. auripilis (Say)

L. basilaris (Say) L. confusus Lec. P

L. ectupus (Sav)

L. griseus (Beauv.)

L. plebejus (Say)

L. quercinus (Say)

L. rudis Brown

### ATHOUS Eschscholtz

A. acanthus (Say)

A. brightwelli (Kby.)

A. cucullatus (Say)

A. rufifrons (Rand.)

A. scapularis (Say)

# DENTICOLLIS Piller & Mitter-

#### packer

- D. denticornis (Kby.)
- D. productus (Rand)

### CTENICERA Latreille

- C. aethiops (Hbst.)
- C. appressa (Rand.)
- C. appropinquans (Rand.)
- C. arata (Lec.) P
- C. cylindriformis (Hbst.)
- C. darlingtoni (Brown)
- C. fallax (Say) P
- C. falsifica (Lec.)
- C. fulvipes (Bland)
- C. hamata (Say)
- C. hieroglyphica (Say)
- C. inflata (Say)
- C. insidiosa (Lec.) P
- C. kendalli (Kby.)
- C. lobata tarsalis (Melsh.)
- C. mediana (Germ.)
- C. mendax (Lec.)
- C. nitidula (Lec.)
- C. propola (Lec.)
- C. pyrrhos (Hbst.)
- C. resplendens (Esch.)
- C. sjaelandica (Mueller)
- C. spinosa (Lec.)
- C. splendens (Zeig.)
- C. sulcicollis (Say)
- C. triundulata (Rand.)
- C. vernalis (Hentz)

## **HEMICREPIDIUS** German

- H. bilobatus (Say)
- H. decoloratus (Say)
- H. memnonius (Hbst.)

# HYPOLITHUS Eschscholtz

H. abbreviatus (Say)

# NEGASTRIUS Thomson

- N. choris (Say)
- N. exiguus (Rand.)
- N. obliquatulus (Melsh.)
- N. tumescens (Lec.)

## **PARALLELOSTETHUS**

#### Schwarz

P. attenuatus (Say)

## **ELATER** Linnaeus

E. abruptus Say

## **OXYGONUS** Leconte

O. obesus (Say)

## SERICUS Eschscholtz

- S. honestus (Rand.)
- S. incongruus (Lec.)
- S. silaceous (Say)
- S. viridanus (Say)

## **DALOPIUS** Eschscholtz

- D. cognatus Brown
- D. pallidus Brown
- D. vagus Brown

## AGRIOTES Eschscholtz

- A. arcanus Brown
- A. avulsus (Lec.)
- A. fucosus (Lec.)
- A. insanus Cand.
- A. isabellinus (Melsh.)
- A. limosus (Lec.)
- A. mancus (Say)
- A. oblongicollis (Melsh.)
- A. pubescens (Melsh.)
- A. quebecensis Brown
- A. stabilis (Lec.)

## AGRIOTELLA Brown

A. bigeminata (Rand.)

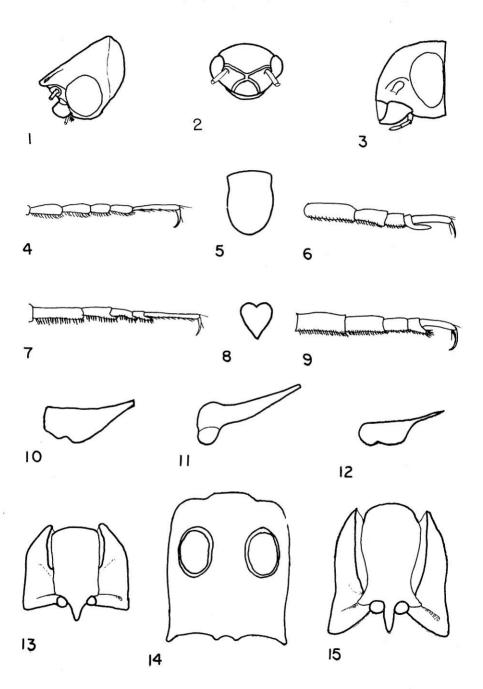
# **GLYPHONYX** Candeze

G. recticollis (Say) ?

# AMPEDUS Dejean

- A. aereolatus (Say)
- A. apicatus (Say)
- A. impolitus (Melsh.)
- A. linteus (Say)
- A. luctuosus (Lec.)
- A. manipularis (Cand.)
- A. melanotoides Brown

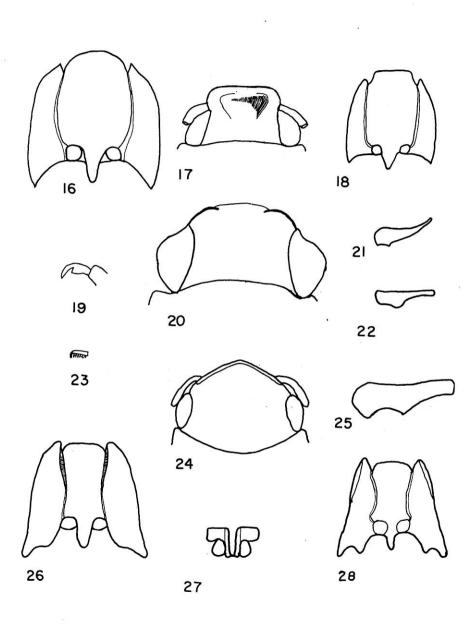
A. militaris (Harris)	M. communis (Gyll.)
A. mixtus (Hbst.)	M. cribulosus (Lec.)
A. nigricans Germ.	M. depressus (Melsh.)
A. nigricollis (Hbst.)	M. divarcarinus Blatch.
A. nigrinus (Hbst.)	M. fissilis (Say)
A. pedalis Germ.	M. ignobilis (Melsh.)
A. rubricus (Say)	M. morosus Cand.
A. sanguinipennis (Say)	M. pertinax (Say)
A. semicinctus (Rand.)	M. tenax (Say)
A. socer (Lec.)	M. trapezoideus (Lec.)
A. verticinus (Beauv.) A. vitiosus (Lec.)	CARDIOPHORUS Eschscholtz
MEGAPENTHES Kiesenwetter	C. convexulus (Say)
	C. convexus (Say)
M. stigmosus (Lec.)	C. gagates Er.
MELANOTUS Eschscholtz	c. gagatte 11.
M. americanus (Hbst.)	HORISTONOTUS Candeze
M. castanipes (Payk.)	H. curiatus (Say)
- A	, , ,
KEY TO THE WISCONSIN GE	ENERA OF ADULT ELATERIDAE
1. Front flattened or concave, fa	cing obliquely dorsally with an
terior margin not extending	downward below the level of the
eves and without oblique clyne	eal carinae beneath; mouthparts
directed and usually project	ing anteriorly (Fig. 1) (Pyro-
Front convey facing enteric	orly usually with anterior mar-
rion convex, facing afterno	orly usually with anterior mar-
gin extending downward being	ow the level of the eyes or cari-
nate and supported beneath	by converging oblique carinae
	jecting anteriorly (Fig. 3) 2
2. Scutellum, or posterior portion	on thereof, heartshaped (Fig. 8)
(Cardiophorinae)	25
Scutellum variable in shape,	not heartshaped (Fig. 5) (Ela-
terinae)	16
3. Hind coxae with ventral plate	
in dilated portion than hind:	A CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY O
	femora (Figs. 10, 12) 4 ates relatively narrow at inner
thind coxae with ventral pla	ares relatively harrow at inner
	er in dilated portion than hind
	9
	r ends (Fig. 10) prosternal su-
tures straight or concave, d	liverging near coxae (Figs. 13,
15) (Pyrophorini)	5
Hind coxae pointed at outer	ends (Fig. 12) prosternal su-
tures convex, converging tow	ard coxae (Figs. 16, 18) (Nega-
	15
bullini — rij pilotumij	10



#### PLATE I

#### ADULT STRUCTURES

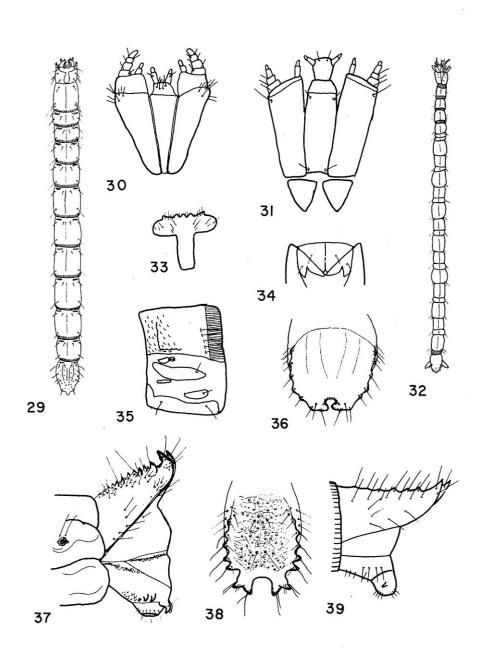
- FIGURE 1. Pityobius anguinus head, lateral.
  - 2. Glyphonyx sp. head, frontal.
  - 3. Agriotes stabilis head, lateral.
  - 4. Limonius basilaris hind tarsus, lateral.
  - 5. Elater abruptus scutellum.
  - 6. Conoderus auritus hind tarsus, lateral.
  - 7. Hemicrepidius memnonius hind tarsus, lateral.
  - 8. Cardiophorus gagates scutellum.
  - 9. Drasterius dorsalis hind tarsus, lateral.
  - 10. Drasterius dorsalis ventral plate of hind coxa.
  - 11. Denticollis denticornis ventral plate of hind coxa.
  - 12. Hypolithus abbreviatus ventral plate of hind coxa.
  - 13. Colaulon rectangularis prothorax, ventral.
  - 14. Alaus oculatus pronotum.
  - 15. Lacon discoideus prothorax, ventral.



#### PLATE II

#### ADULT STRUCTURES

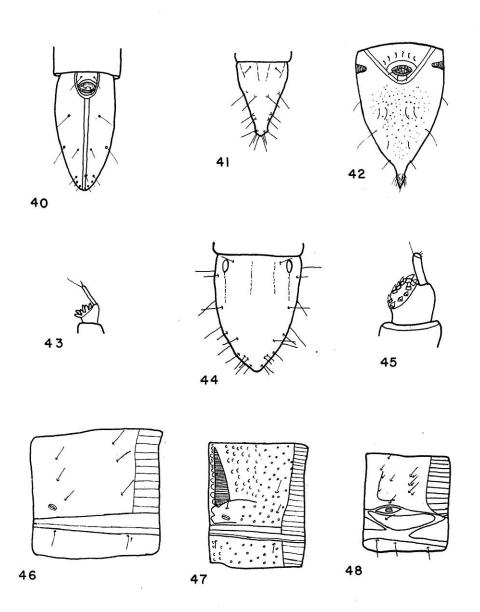
- FIGURE 16. Hypolithus abbreviatus prothorax, ventral.
  - 17. Athous cucullatus head, dorsal.
  - 18. Negastrius choris prothorax, ventral.
  - 19. Oxygonus obesus tarsal claw.
  - 20. Ctenicera pyrrhos head, dorsal.
  - 21. Melanotus fissilis ventral plate of hind coxa.
  - 22. Dalopius pallidus ventral plate of hind coxa.
  - 23. Melanotus fissilis tarsal claw.
  - 24. Megapenthes limbalis head, dorsal.
  - 25. Elater abruptus ventral plate of hind coxa.
  - 26. Ampedus linteus prothorax, ventral.
  - 27. Parallelostethus attenuatus mesosternal cavity, ventral.
  - 28. Megapenthes limbalis prothorax, ventral.



#### PLATE III

#### LARVAE

- FIGURE 29. Melanotus communis larva, dorsal.
  - 30. Drasterius dorsalis ventral mouthparts.
  - 31. Ctenicera kendalli ventral mouthparts.
  - 32. Cardiophorus sp. larva, dorsal.
  - 33. Conoderus auritus fronto-clypeal sclerite.
  - 34. Ctenicera kendalli presternal area.
  - 35. Hemicrepidius bilobatus sixth abdominal segment, lateral.
  - 36. Limonius sp. ninth abdominal segment, dorsal.
  - 37. Alaus myops ninth and tenth abdominal segments, lateral.
  - 38. Lacon marmoratus ninth abdominal segment, dorsal.
  - 39. Conoderus auritus ninth and tenth abdominal segments, lateral.



#### PLATE IV

#### LARVAE

- FIGURE 40. Elater abruptus ninth and tenth abdominal segments, ventral.
  - 41. Dalopius pallidus ninth abdominal segment, dorsal.
  - 42. Megapenthes limbalis ninth and tenth abdominal segments, ventral.
  - 43. Elater abruptus antenna.
  - 44. Agriotes mancus ninth abdominal segment, dorsal.
  - 45. Parallelostethus attenuatus antenna.
  - 46. Agriotes mancus sixth abdominal segment, lateral.
  - 47. Ampedus nigricollis sixth abdominal segment, lateral.
  - 48. Hypolithus abbreviatus sixth abdominal segment, lateral.

5.	Prosternal sutures forming antennal grooves (Figs. 13, 15) (Agrypnina)
	Prosternal sutures normal, no antennal grooves
6.	Pronotum with deep linear impressions; antennal groove
	occupying entire prosternal suture (Fig. 15) Lacor
	Pronotum without deep impressions; antennal groove abbre-
	visted (Fig. 13)
7	viated (Fig. 13) Colaulor Pronotum with eyelike spots (Fig. 14); tarsal claws with a
	long pencil of bristles at base of each Alaus
	Pronotum without eyelike spots; tarsal claws without a pencil
	of hristles (Condoring)
8	of bristles (Conoderina) & Lobe on fourth tarsal segment prominent, projecting beneath
٠.	fifth for at least one-fourth the length of the fifth segment
	(Fig. 6) Conoderus
	Lobed process on fourth tarsal segment short and broad, pro-
	jecting only slightly beneath the fifth (Fig. 9) Drasterius
9	Antennae 12-segmented (Pityobini) Pityobius
υ.	Antenna 11-segmented (Denticollini = Lepturoidini) 10
10	Tarsal claws simple (Fig. 4) 11
10.	Tarsal claws with a stout tooth at base (Fig. 19) Oxygonus
11	Prosternal lobe extending forward well beyond hind margins
	of eyes; with appearance of typical Elaterid 12
	Prosternal lobe short, not extending forward beyond hind
	margins of eyes; resembling a Cantharid Denticollis
12.	Margin of front straight, uniformly elevated (Fig. 17) 13
	Margin of front curved, usually depressed in middle (Fig.
	20)14
13.	20) 14 First two tarsal segments subequal in length (Fig. 4) Limonius
	First tarsal segment distinctly longer than secondAthous
14.	Second and third tarsal segments lobed (Fig. 7)
	Hemicrenidius
	Tarsal segments without lobes Ctenicera
15.	Prosternal sutures subarcuate, converging gradually toward
	anterior lobe and coxal cavities (Fig. 16) Hypolithus
	Prosternal sutures converging suddenly at base of anterior
	lobe and at coxal cavities (Fig. 18) Negastrius
16.	Hind coxal plates with posterior margins sinuate (Fig. 22);
	propleural margins concave or excavated along prosternal
	sutures, at least anteriorly (Agriotini) 21
	Hind coxal plates with posterior margins angulate (Figs.
	21, 25); propleural margins variable along prosternal
17	sutures 17
17.	Propleural margins depressed or excavated along prosternal
	sutures, at least anteriorly (Fig. 26) 24
	Propleural margins not depressed or excavated along pro-
	sternal sutures (Fig. 28) 18

18.	Margin of front elevated above the clypeus (Fig. 24)  Megapenthes Margin of front not elevated in middle above clypeus (Ela-
	Margin of front not elevated in middle above clypeus (Elaterini)
19.	terini)
	Hind coxal plates with a blunt or indistinct angle at widest
20.	point; length, less than 15 mm Sericus Sides of mesosternal cavity parallel (Fig. 27); pronotum
	piceous Parallelostethus Sides of mesosternal cavity convergent posteriorly; pro-
21.	
99	Tarsal claws simple 22
44.	Lateral margins of prothorax inferior anteriorly 23 Lateral margins straight, not inferior anteriorly Dalopius
23.	Margin of front elevated; prosternal lobe extending beyond
	anterior ends of propleura Agriotella
	Margin of front not elevated (Fig. 3); prosternal lobe not extending beyond anterior ends of propleura Agriotes
24.	Tarsal claws pectinate (Fig. 23) (Melanotini) Melanotus
	Tarsal claws simple (Ampedini) Amnedus
25.	Pronotum without a distinct lateral margin, apparent lateral margin visible posteriorly from ventral side Cardiophorus
	Pronotum with lateral margin distinct posteriorly and visible
	dorsally Horistonotus
	KEY TO THE WISCONSIN GENERA OF LARVAL ELATERIDAE <sup>3</sup>
1.	Ninth abdominal segment with a median caudal notch (Figs.
	36, 38) (Pyrophorinae) 3 Ninth abdominal segment without a median caudal notch
	(Figs. 29, 32, 40, 41, 42, 44) 2
2.	Abdomen entirely soft-skinned; abdominal segments sub-
	divided into 2 or 3 ringlike divisions (Fig. 32) (Cardio-
	phorinae) 26 Abdomen partially or completely sclerotized; abdominal seg-
	ments not subdivided as above (Fig. 29) (Elaterinae) 17
3.	Submentum triangular; bases of stipes contiguous (Fig. 30) 4
	Submentum not triangular; bases of stipes well separated (Fig. 31) (Denticollini = Lepturoidini)9
4.	Anal hooks present on tenth abdominal segment (Figs. 37.
	39) (Pyrophorini) 5
	Anal hooks absent, armature consisting of a narrow ridged band on each side of tenth segment (Pityobini) Pityobius
	owner of each side of tenth segment (Fityobill) Preyours

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The larvae of *Oxygonus* are unknown.

5.	Dorsum of head with a prominent longitudinal groove extending from near frontal suture to hind margin of head on either side; with short spines in addition to anal hooks on tenth abdominal segment (Fig. 37) (Hemirhipina) Alaus Dorsum of head without extensive longitudinal grooves, sometimes with short grooves or rows of setae posteriorly; without short spines in addition to anal hooks on tenth segment6
6.	Anal hooks long and prominent, extending to or beyond tip of tenth abdominal segment (Agrypnina) 7 Anal hooks short and inconspicuous, not extending to tip of tenth abdominal segment (Fig. 39) (Conoderina) 8
7.	Dorsum of ninth abdominal segment covered with small tubercles (Fig. 38) Lacon Dorsum of ninth abdominal segment without tubercles Colaulon?
8.	Frons truncate at base (Fig. 33) Conoderus
Q	Frons tapering to a blunt point at base Drasterius First 8 abdominal segments conspicuously sculptured or pit-
υ.	ted (Fig. 35)14
	ted (Fig. 35) 14 First 8 abdominal segments smooth; sparsely or finely punc-
10.	Nasale tridentate or if consisting of one triple-pointed tooth, with a dorsal seta on the head on each side of and adjacent to the posterior portion of the fronto-clypeal area 15  Nasale consisting of one single- or triple-pointed tooth; without dorsal setae adjacent to the posterior portion of the fronto-clypeal area 11
11.	Presternum of prothorax consisting of one large triangular sclerite 12
	Presternum of prothorax divided into 2 or more sclerites (Fig. 34) Ctenicera
12.	Lateral margins of ninth abdominal segment with two or more prominent projections on each side; caudal notch variable
	Lateral margins of ninth abdominal segment sinuate with not more than one prominent projection on each side (Fig.
	36) caudal notch small Limonius
13.	Dorsum red-brown to black; urogomphi with outer prongs longer than inner Denticollis
	Dorsum yellow-brown or amber; urogomphi variable Ctenicera
14.	Eyes present; abdominal segments with conspicuous pits or
	crescent-shaped sculpturing Athous
	Eyes absent; abdominal segments with crescent-shaped sculp- turing (Fig. 35)  Hemicrenidius
	turing trig aal nemacremans

15.	Lateral margins of ninth abdominal segment with prominent
	projections, anterolateral impressions on tergites of abdominal segments 2 through 8 reaching or approaching mid-dorsal
	line Ctenicera
	Lateral margins of ninth abdominal segments smooth or hardly protuberant; anterolateral impressions absent or more abbreviated (Fig. 48) (Negastrini — Hypnoidini) 16
16.	pronged Hypolithus
	Nasale tridentate; urogomphi simple, undivided Negastrius
17.	Sternum of ninth abdominal segment narrower anteriorly than sternum of eighth posteriorly (Fig. 40); tip of ninth segment broadly rounded (Elaterini) 18
	Sternum of ninth abdominal segment broader anteriorly than sternum of eighth posteriorly (Fig. 42); tip of ninth segment bluntly or sharply pointed or scalloped (Figs. 29, 41,
10	42, 44)
18.	Nasale consisting of one triple-pointed tooth; second antennal segment with 5 or more papillae (Figs. 43, 45) 19
	Nasale consisting of one single-pointed tooth; second antennal
	segment with a single papilla Sericus
19.	Second antennal segment with 8 to 13 papillae (Fig. 45)  ———————————————————————————————————
20.	Second antennal segment with 5 to 7 papillae (Fig. 43) Elater Dorsum of ninth abdominal segment flattened and with margin scalloped (Fig. 29) (Melanotini) Melanotus
	Dorsum of ninth abdominal segment neither flattened nor scalloped21
21.	Nasale consisting of one triple-pointed tooth, abdominal ter-
	gites without striate impressions (Agriotini) 22
	Nasale variable, if consisting of one triple-pointed tooth, the abdominal tergites with striate impressions (Fig. 47) (Ampedini) 25
22.	Ninth abdominal segment with a pair of central dorso-tergal
	setae (Fig. 41) Dalopius
	Ninth abdominal segment without central dorso-tergal setae
	(Fig. 44) 23
23.	First 8 abdominal tergites with 3 or more prominent setae in a transverse line anteriorly (Fig. 46) (additional short
	setae may be present); eyes usually present 24
	First 8 abdominal tergites with only 2 prominent setae in a
	transverse line anteriorly (additional short setae may be
	present); eves lacking Agriotella?

- 26. With an eye at base of each antenna (Fig. 32) \_\_ Cardiophorus Without eyes \_\_\_\_\_\_ Horistonotus

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