

A New *Scelolyperus* and a Key to the American
Species North of Mexico (Coleoptera:
Chrysomelidae)

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The genus *Scelolyperus* Crotch appears to have received very little attention since Dr. Horn presented his description of *cyanellus* in 1895. The new species presented herein thus bridges a gap of 50 years of systematic inactivity for this genus; and, although Horn's excellent key and review of the genus leave little to be desired, a brief modification of the half-century-old tables to include his *cyanellus* and the new form seems worthwhile.

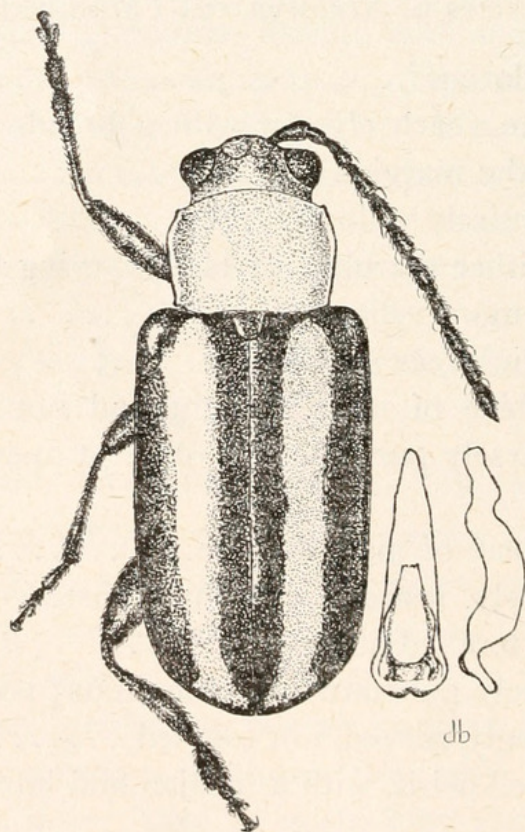
Key to the Species of *Scelolyperus* (Modified from Horn)

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|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Elytra unicolorous | 2 |
| Elytra vittate (each elytron with a broad, median, flavous vitta and the margins piceous) | <i>blakeae</i> , n. sp. |
| 2. Pronotum entirely yellow | 3 |
| Pronotum either maculate or blue, varying to black | 6 |
| 3. Head and femora yellow | <i>flaviceps</i> Horn |
| Head metallic green | 4 |
| 4. Posterior tibiae of male straight and not toothed; elytra finely, sparsely punctate, smoother at apex <i>flavicollis</i> Lec. | |
| Posterior tibiae of male arcuate | 5 |
| 5. Elytra coarsely, sparsely punctate; posterior tibiae of male stout and toothed at base | <i>tejonius</i> Crotch |
| Elytra sparsely punctate and alutaceous; posterior tibiae of male strongly curved, not toothed | <i>loripes</i> Horn |
| 6. Pronotum yellowish, with a median and lateral spot piceous <i>maculicollis</i> Lec. | |
| Pronotum uniformly blue, greenish, or black | 7 |
| 7. Elytra evidently punctate | 8 |
| Elytra alutaceous, not punctate | 11 |
| 8. Pronotum polished, impunctate, black | 9 |
| Pronotum sparsely punctate, green, blue, or bronze | 10 |

9. Size relatively small, 3-4 mm. *cyanellus* Horn
 Size relatively large, 6-7 mm. *maculicollis* (variety)
 10. Posterior tibiae of male straight; antennae and legs black
 *graptoderoides* Crotch
 Posterior tibiae of male curved; antennae at base, anterior
 femora, and tibiae in great part yellow ... *schwarzi* Horn
 11. Antennae filiform, last segment scarcely longer than the
 preceding *longulus* Lec.
 Antennae broader externally, the outer segments flattened
 and slightly concave beneath in male, last segment no-
 tably longer than the preceding *decipiens* Horn

***Scelolyperus blakeae* new species**

Upper surface strongly shining, pronotum flavous to fulvous, elytra piceous and each with a broad, median flavous vitta.



Head polished, not punctate, pale, darker above each eye and on the epicranium, frontal tubercles prominent, interocular space nearly twice the vertical width of the eye; clypeus and labrum

with a few moderately long, pale setae; antennae reaching past middle of elytra, fuscous, basal segments less dark. Pronotum only slightly convex, two-thirds as long as wide, widest at apical third, surface polished, very finely, sparsely punctate, color flavous to rufous. Scutellum dark. Elytra a little more than one and one-third times as wide as pronotum, humeri prominent; surface polished, very finely punctate (apparently impunctate); color piceous with a broad, median, flavous vitta extending from base to apex; the piceous areas with a greenish reflection in strong light; the flavous areas with a micro-granular appearance due to a fine but strong subcuticular, alutaceous structure; a few fine setae along the lateral and apical margins. Body beneath polished, pale, darker on episternal sclerites, sparsely covered with pale pubescence, more densely so at sides; legs fuscous, lighter at base; tibiae of male slightly arcuate and without spurs, female with tibial spurs; basal segment of hind tarsus of male greatly delated, concave beneath, almost as long as the other tarsal segments together. Length, 3–4.5 mm.

Holotype, male, collected by author from a very thorny species of Rhamnaceae (*Condalia spathulata* A. Gray, determined by S. F. Blake, U. S. D. A.) at Big Bend State Park, Chisos Mts., Brewster County, TEXAS, July 12 to 16, 1941; and *allotype*, female, with same data, are deposited in the author's collection. Male plesiotype and 78 paratypes (39 of each sex) with same data are deposited as follows: Two pairs in the U. S. National Museum through Mrs. Doris H. Blake, one pair each in the collections of Dr. W. J. Brown, Prof. J. N. Knull, Mr. C. A. Frost, Mr. C. D. Orchard, Mr. Borys Malkin, Capt. John J. duBois, The Academy of Sciences at San Francisco, The American Museum of Natural History through Dr. Mont Cazier, The British Museum, and Lt. William Barr. The remaining specimens are in the author's collection.

In addition to the above designated paratypes, several topotypical specimens are in the collections of Captain duBois and Lt. Barr, who were present at the time of the original collection. Since these men are now in the armed services, their materials are not available for study and, unfortunately, cannot be included in the type series.

It is quite unnecessary to compare *blakeae* with any of our other *Scelolyperus* for its vittate elytra will immediately separate it from all others. However, it might easily be confused with the vittate *Luperodes* with which it bears strong superficial resemblances. From the latter, it will be readily separated by its greatly dilated basal tarsal segment on the posterior leg of the male (see figure).

The sexes are dimorphic as usual in *Scelolyperus*. But, in addition to the usual differences between the sexes, such as the elytra more explanate in the female, tibiae slightly arcuate in the male, antennae more elongate and filiform in male, and the different apical structure of the last ventral abdominal segment, there is apparently a color relationship. The females have a distinctly wider flavous vitta than the males. As a result of this feature, the females present quite a different facies to that of the male; and, in the extreme, they may have the dark margins almost absent. The male typically possesses flavous vittae equal in width to the piceous margins.

At the time of discovery there were actually millions of the beetles available. A single blow on the host plant would completely cover the beating sheet and fill the air about the plant. From this it might seem unfortunate that such a limited number of specimens was obtained; however, unless this species proves the exception to the general experiences the writer has known with this type of beetle, it will be abundantly available for future collectors at its type locality.

The new species is named after Mrs. Doris H. Blake in recognition of her excellent work on the Chrysomelidae and her assistance with this particular problem. Mrs. Blake also prepared the accompanying drawing. In addition to Mrs. Blake's able assistance the writer received valuable aid from the other half of the Blake family—Mr. S. F. Blake, and from Dr. E. Gorton Linsley whose esteemed advice in this little problem as well as on many past occasions has been truly appreciated.

LITERATURE CITED

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