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**STACHYOCNEMUS APICALIS IS REDISCOVERED
IN VIRGINIA (HETEROPTERA: ALYDIDAE). —**

With a known range extending from Connecticut to Florida, west to California and Mexico, and north to Alberta (see map in Hoffman, 1992), the small, structurally distinctive *Stachyocnemus apicalis* (Dallas) is at once one of the most widely distributed and rarely collected species of Alydidae. The only record of its occurrence in Virginia is based on a specimen collected by G. W. Underhill at Chester (Chesterfield Co.) on 24 May 1920. Nonetheless, my treatment of these bugs (Hoffman, 1975) naively predicted that “Probably devoted collecting efforts will turn up *apicalis* at other places in eastern Virginia.”

Thirty-six years later, and despite a lot of collecting in eastern Virginia since 1989, the species had still not turned up, and I had given up any hope of ever seeing new instate material. But the law of serendipitous discovery is still in effect, and in mid-summer of 2011, I collected a specimen of this elusive bug in Martinsville. The residential enclave where I live has a small swimming pool to which I sometimes resort, and from which various drowned insects and spiders are salvaged. During the early summer of 2011 I had not indulged in either activity, but the ambient temperature of 98° F /36° C on 21 July induced an impulse to enjoy a cooling swim. As usual, the occasion was taken to harvest floating insects of possible interest for the VMNH collection, and among the selection was a small dark bug that I first thought was a rhopalid, but as it dried that guess had to be revised to “unknown small alydid.” The actual identity only emerged the next morning when access to a microscope revealed the striking habitus of *S. apicalis*.

The collection site, in a suburban cluster of townhouses and small residences, is surrounded by a thin fringe of second growth pines and broadleaf trees. There is nowhere in the vicinity anything like the dry, sandpit biotope said to be favored by the species (Vestal, 1913; Blatchley, 1926).

Aside from confirming the continued existence of the species in Virginia, the specimen (deposited in the VMNH collection) represents an extension of its known lowland range about 138 miles/230 km westward across the Piedmont.

Stachyocnemus apicalis is easily distinguished from other members of its family in Virginia by a small acute projection on the posterior edge of the pronotum, two rows of spinules on the metatibiae, and especially the profuse black setation of the body that imparts a bristly appearance. An excellent photograph of the species is available at <http://bugguide.net/node/view/471616/bgpage>.

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