

Phyllotocus Fischer, 1823

Taxonomy

Sub family: Melolonthinae / Tribe: Sericini / Genus: *Phyllotocus*

Distinguishing Features

Small, ovate beetles, body length 4-10mm. Body colouration variable- brown, black, yellowish or bicoloured. Antennae 8-9 segmented, with a 3-segmented club. Surface of frons, clypeus and labrum slightly convex. Labrum attached to apical margin of clypeus, separated by a suture. Posterior angle of the pronotum obtuse or rounded, not closely applied to the shoulders of the elytra. Prosterna with a long, slender, setose process. Metacoxae greatly enlarged. Penultimate ventrite and propygidium separated by a suture. Metatibial apical spurs separated, so that tarsi can move between them. Tarsal segments slender and can be quite elongated, particularly hind tarsi. Inner claw of foretarsi enlarged in males. Tarsal claws simple.

Related and Similar Species

There are currently 28 species of *Phyllotocus* described.

Historically a member of the Sericini, they are currently placed in the Phyllotocini tribe which share the following attributes:

Generally small sized with a convex body shape. Labrum indistinct, attached to the front margin of the clypeus. Metacoxae large, projecting forward where metasternum would usually be, and commonly covering first two abdominal sternites. Widely separated mesocoxae. Metatibial spurs widely separated, so that the tarsi can pass between them. Tarsal claws simple, male protarsal claws strongly asymmetrical and sometimes toothed. A long and slender prosternal process usually present.

An updated key to the Australian genera of Phyllotocini is provided by Weir et.al. (2019).

A previous key to Australian 'Sericiini' can be found in Britton (1957).

Biological Data

Phyllotocus beetles, or nectar scarabs, are active during the day and commonly found on flowers. They feed on pollen and nectar from native Australian trees, particularly *Angophora*, *Eucalyptus* and *Leptospermum*. Adults of some species are known to swarm, but do not cause damage.

Larvae are soil dwellers, feeding on decaying organic matter.

Distribution

Phyllotocus are found across Australia, along the east from North Queensland to Tasmania, and across to South Australia. They have been found across the South West of Western Australia, and northwards to Carnarvon. They are absent from north west WA and the Northern Territory.

P. macleayi has been introduced to New Zealand.

References

Britton, E.B. 1957. A Revision of the Australian Chafers (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Melolonthinae). London : British Museum Vol. 1 vii 185 pp.

Hangay, G., Zborowski, P. 2010. A Guide To Beetles of Australia. CSIRO Publishing, Victoria, Australia. x + 238 pp.



[Phyllotocus sp. dorsal view](#)

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[Phyllotocus sp. lateral view](#)

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[Phyllotocus sp. ventral view](#)

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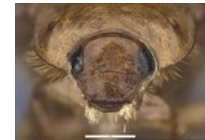
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[Phyllotocus sp. clypeus](#)

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[Phyllotocus sp. head front](#)

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