Bruchidius siliquastri Delobel, 2007 (Chrysomelidae, Bruchinae) new to Britain

Maxwell V.L. Barclay
Department of Life Sciences, The Natural History Museum, London SW7 5BD m.barclay@nhm.ac.uk

The seed beetle *Bruchidius siliquastri* Delobel, 2007 (Fig. 1) is associated with leguminous trees of the genus *Cercis* (Fabaceae), particularly the Judas tree *Cercis siliquastrum* Linnaeus. It was described from southern France by Delobel in Kergoat *et al.* (2007), who also cite specimens from Hungary and China (not included in the type series). They assume a Chinese origin. The species has since been reported from Slovakia (Kollar *et al.*, 2009), Belgium (Hanssens, 2009), the Czech Republic (Sefrova *et al.*, 2010), Bulgaria (Stojanova *et al.*, 2011), Serbia (Gavrilovic & Savic, 2013) and Turkey (Hizal & Parlak, 2013), as well as from Spain, where its life history and immature stages have been explored (Yus Ramos *et al.* 2009a, 2009b, 2009c). I have anticipated its arrival in Britain for some time, and with this in mind have regularly kept pods of *Cercis siliquastrum*, including from Silwood Park (2010/11) and Chelsea Physic Gardens (2011/12), but have not previously found any evidence of the beetle or any other seed predator.

On 26 April 2014, while waiting for my children in the cemetery park of Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, London SW7 (VC 21: TQ271793), I noticed an old Judas tree with a large number of last-year's old dry pods still attached. A few of these had ragged, old exit holes, and when broken open, a percentage of the seeds were found to have been hollowed out. Although I assumed any beetles had already departed (adults supposedly eclose in late summer e.g. see Gavrilovic & Savic, 2013) I took a pocketful of around 20 pods 'just in case' and transferred them to a zip lock bag on my desk. On 2 May I was rewarded with a single adult *Bruchidius siliquastri.* On 3 May I collected 30 or so more pods from the same tree, and four more adults emerged between the 7th and 11th, one leaving a fresh, circular exit hole in the dry pod.

The only other insects found in the dry pods were Psocoptera. No parasitoids were reared, but this may be because the beetles (and any parasitoids) had emerged earlier and overwintered as adults. Stojanova *et al.* (2011) observed a large parasitoid fauna associated with *Bruchidius siliquastri* in Bulgaria. It remains to be seen which species of Hymenoptera are associated with this beetle in Britain.

In the hopes of finding adult *Bruchidius*, I beat the Judas tree and nearby blossom on 26 April and 3 May, but failed to locate any examples of the beetle. However, five adults were collected by beating the same tree on 17 May, and several more on 14 June. By 3 July, when the new pods had already grown quite large, no *Bruchidius* could be found by beating the Judas tree.

Most of the papers cited above refer to very large populations of *Bruchidius siliquastri*, with most or all observed seeds being attacked. This was not the case in

London, where the majority of the seeds remained intact. Possibly, considering my earlier negative results, the species has only recently arrived and will become more widespread in future. However, it should be noted that the British Isles are further north than any other records of *Bruchidius siliquastri*, and well outside the native range of the Judas tree or any other species of *Cercis*. It is possible that the beetle benefits from the warmer average temperatures in Central London.

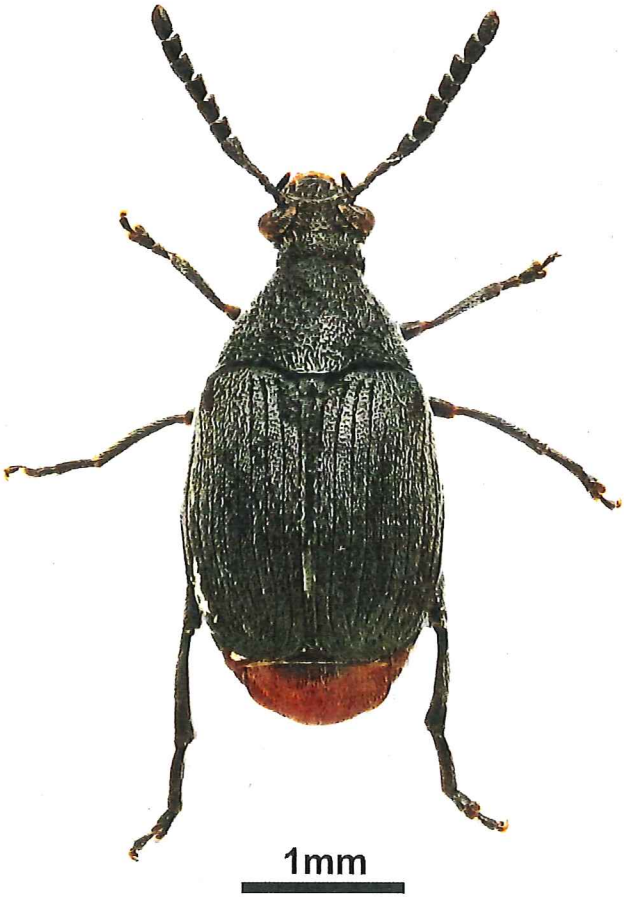

Fig. 1 *Bruchidius siliquastri* Delobel, 2007 (Chrysomelidae: Bruchinae). British specimen now in the Natural History Museum. Image: Harry Taylor.

Bruchidius siliquastri can immediately be recognised from all other species of Bruchinae occurring in Northern Europe by its bright red abdomen. This is visible dorsally, since the red pygidium extends well beyond the apices of the elytra. Apart from this striking feature it resembles a slightly small example of *Bruchidius villosus* (Fabricius), being black with whitish pubescence on the dorsal surface.

The host genus *Cercis* occurs through the northern hemisphere, and while the Judas tree is native to southern Europe and western Asia, it is a popular ornamental in cities and parks elsewhere. It is apparently named for a legend that Judas Iscariot hanged himself from one, but the majority of London specimens are much too small for any such activities. It also supports a jumping plant louse *Cacopsylla pulchella* (Löw) (Hemiptera: Psyllidae) which I have encountered relatively frequently on young leaves of London trees.

Most mentioned specimens of *Bruchidius siliquastri,* and examples of pods and seeds with exit holes, have been deposited in the British Isles Collection of Coleoptera at the Natural History Museum, London.

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Glocianus moelleri (Thomson, C.G.) (Curculionidae) new to Dorset

A.G. Duff[1] *and A.J. Allen*[2]

[1] 110 Cromer Road, West Runton, Norfolk NR27 9QA. andrew.duff@virgin.net

[2] 56 Windsor Way, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 3BN

On 5 June 2014 we were looking for beetles in an area of relict chalk grassland at Stubhampton Bottom, Dorset (VC 9; ST8916), when AJA sieved an unusual-looking ceutorhynchine weevil from moss and litter on a flowery bank overhanging the access track. The specimen was later identified as *Glocianus moelleri* (Thompson, C.G.). This is a little-known species, currently graded RDB K – Insufficiently Known by JNCC (Hyman, 1992), with few modern records. Morris (1999) provided a key to the genus and details of historical records from North Hampshire, West Kent, Surrey, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. More recent records have confirmed its occurrence in both North Hampshire and Surrey (Denton, 2001), and provided new vice-county records from South Essex (Denton, 2008), South Wiltshire (Darby, 2009) and Buckinghamshire (Hodges, 2010).

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