A Review of the Genus *Sphenoptera* **DEJEAN, 1833** (Coleoptera: Buprestidae) of the Balkan Peninsula

**Mark Yu. Kalashian¹**, **Vladimir P. Sakalian²**

¹Institute of Zoology, National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, 7 P. Sevak, Yerevan, 375014, Armenia, e-mail: mkalashian@yahoo.com
²Institute of Zoology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd., 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: sakalian@inaagency.com

**Abstract:** A faunistic review and a key to the determination of 19 known from the Balkan Peninsula *Sphenoptera* species and subspecies are presented. The faunistic review contains information about synonymy, distributional patterns and remarks on the nomenclature and taxonomy of some taxa. *Sphenoptera (Sphenoptera) melitta* _OBENBERGER, 1927_ syn. n. is considered a junior subjective synonym of _Sphenoptera (Sphenoptera) antiqua_ (ILLIGER, 1803). Lectotypes for _Sphenoptera (Sphenoptera) melitta_ _OBENBERGER, 1927_, and _Sphenoptera (Sphenoptera) parnassica_ _JAKOVLEV, 1887_, are designated to fix the use of the names in the course of a taxonomic revision of the group. The zoogeographical position and connections of the Balkan _Sphenoptera_ fauna are analyzed and discussed.

**Key words:** Greece Islands, adjacent territories, identification key, faunistic, faunistic similarity, zoogeography

**Introduction**

One of the most difficult for studying species among the Buprestidae family belongs to the genus _Sphenoptera_ **DEJEAN, 1833**. This difficulty can be explained by the lack of enough good morphological characters for separate species and the high level of species variation, which depends on the locality conditions as well as on the diversity of the host plants of each species.

There are no works dedicated directly to the Balkan fauna of _Sphenoptera_, but information about taxonomy, distribution and some biological and ecological characteristics of the species of this fauna can be found in many publications. First data about the Balkan _Sphenoptera_ were represented in **BRULLÉ (1832)**, who described from Greece (Morée) _Sphenoptera lapidaria_ (under the genera-group name *Buprestis*) among other buprestid species. The few works dedicated to the Coleoptera or Buprestidae fauna of different Balkan countries contain data on _Sphenoptera_. Catalogues of _OBENBERGER, 1933_ (for Bulgaria), **MÜHLE et al., 2000** (for Greece) and **SAKALIAN, 2003** (for Bulgaria) can be considered most valuable. Data on occurrence of _Sphenoptera_ species in the Balkan countries are disseminated in numerous checklists, catalogues, faunistical reviews, including those on adjacent countries, etc. (**HEYDEN et al. 1883, 1891, 1906**, **OERTZEN 1886**, **KUTHY 1900**, **CISIKI 1909**, **JACOBSON 1913**, **WINKLER 1925, 1926**,