

# The huhu *Prionoplus reticularis* (Cerambycidae) and other Coleoptera in *Acacia*

J. CHARLES WATT

Entomology Division, DSIR, Private Bag, Auckland

## Abstract

A large larva of *Prionoplus reticularis* White, 1846 is recorded for the first time from a partly decayed *Acacia mearnsii* de Wild log, along with various other Coleoptera.

Keywords: Coleoptera; Cerambycidae; *Prionoplus reticularis*; host record.

*Prionoplus reticularis* was recorded by Edwards (1959) from 14 species of native and introduced gymnosperms, but there is only one unquestioned record from an angiosperm, i.e., from tawa, *Beilschmiedia tawa* (A. Cunn.) Benth. et Hook. f. ex Kirk.

On 8 October 1981, I cut up one half of a partly decayed log of a wattle at Wattle Bay on the North Shore of the Manukau Harbour, Auckland. The log was situated in an area dominated by *Pinus radiata* D. Don and *Acacia mearnsii*. A large, yellow, probably prepupal cerambycid larva was found in a large gallery in the centre of the log. From the size and shape of the gallery, it appeared to be in the last stage of preparing a pupal chamber.

This larva appeared to be *P. reticularis*, which was later confirmed in the laboratory after the specimen had been fixed. Dr G. Kuschel, Entomology Division, later examined the remaining half of the log, and identified it as *Acacia mearnsii*. The identification was further confirmed by Mr J. B. Luckens, of Hobsonville, who examined a sample of bark and wood.

Huhu larvae have frequently been found at Wattle Bay by Dr Kuschel in *Pinus radiata*, but never in *Acacia*. The present record is no doubt due to less acute selectivity than usual by an ovipositing female. Unfortunately nothing is known of the specific attractants inducing oviposition in *P. reticularis*. Presumably these attractants are characteristic of the wood of recently dead conifers, where huhus almost always oviposit.

The gallery occupied by the huhu larva was excavated in quite sound wood. Elsewhere, parts of the log were decaying, and at its base (where there were remnants of a stump), quite rotten. Several larvae of an alleculine tenebrionid were found in this dark-coloured, powdery rotten material. These began emerging about 6 weeks later, and proved to be *Tanychilus sophorae* Broun, 1880.

A variety of Coleoptera were found in the partly decayed portions of the log, including adults and larvae of the tenebrionid *Uloma tenebrioides* (White, 1846), adults and larvae of the prostomid *Dryocora howitti* Pascoe, 1868, larvae of the elaterid *Ochosternus zealandicus* (White, 1846), and unidentified larvae of Curculionidae and Cerambycidae.

At the time that the huhu larva was cut out of the log, the pupa of the rhipiphorid *Allocinops brookesi* Broun, 1921 fell out. A search failed to reveal the pupal cell from which it had fallen. Immature stages of this species were previously unknown, so once the identity of the specimen was known, it was preserved as a pupa.

All specimens have been deposited in the New Zealand Arthropod Collection, Entomology Division, DSIR, Auckland.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Dr Kuschel for identifying the log, and for other information about Wattle Bay, and Mr Luckens for confirming identification of the wood. Mrs B. G. Bennett, Entomology Division, carefully attended to the rearing of *Tanychilus sophorae*.

#### REFERENCE

- EDWARDS, J. S. 1959: Host range in *Prionoplus reticularis* White. *Transactions of the Royal Society of New Zealand* 87:315-318.