

# THE PRESENCE OF *OTIORHYNCHUS ARMADILLO* (ROSSI, 1792) (COLEOPTERA: CURCULIONIDAE: ENTIMINAE) IN NORTH POLAND

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**Introduction.** In the recent years a strong expansion of *Otiorhynchus armadillo* in the northerly direction has been observed in Europe. It is a species, which until recently was encountered only in North-West Balkans and mountainous regions of several countries located in Central Europe (Frieser 1981). In 1995 it reached Sweden, and in 2010 – Norway (Staverløkk, 2010). In Poland *Otiorhynchus armadillo* had been first recorded in the city of Warsaw (Mazur & Mokrzyck, 2011).

**Materials and methods.** In 2018–2020 a lot of specimens were collected in small household plot bordering with municipal South Park in Słupsk. In mid-September 2020, up to 5–7 males and females/day were observed simultaneously on the shaded wall of the house.

**Results.** The origin of this flightless species in Słupsk is unknown; it is possible it had been transferred with soil or with plants, as had frequently taken place in other countries (Staverløkk, 2010). The biology of *O. armadillo* has been studied quite extensively because locally it has the status of a pest. The species is polyphagous. In Italy Bene and Parrini (1986) observed over 100 plant species and cultivars in 50 genera (mostly of woody plants) susceptible to attack by *O. armadillo*. They note economic damage was caused on *Camellia japonica*, *Prunus laurocerasus* and *Azalea*, *Rhododendron* and *Taxus* spp. Imagines have been observed to feed on leaves of various species of trees and shrubs; larval feeding on the roots was studied in Norway (Staverløkk, 2010). In some countries the impact of its presence on economy is significant enough to attempt eradication of the species both chemically and biologically (Grassi et al., 2003).

In Słupsk beetles gnawed at night on the leaves of rhododendrons and yellow azalea *Rhododendron luteum* Sweet, 1830. According to preliminary observations some females probably hibernate, although this needs to be confirmed by special studies.

**Conclusion.** The weevil can create stable populations in northern Poland. Its dispersal is limited by the transfer of infected soil with larvae. Further resettlement can lead to a massive appearance of a dangerous pest of garden and ornamental plants.

## References

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