

**A new species of *Tyrtaeus* Champion, 1913
from Dominican amber
(Coleoptera Tenebrionidae)**

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Summary - *Tyrtaeus cupreorutilans* **nov. sp.**, a new fossil darkling beetle from Dominican amber (Early Miocene), is described. A comparison of this new species to their extant and fossil congeners is presented.

Resumen - En esta nota es descrita una nueva especie fósil de tenebriónide incluida en el ámbar Dominicano (Mioceno Inferiór): *Tyrtaeus cupreorutilans* **nov. sp.** Tambien se presentan una comparation de esta nueva especie a otros miembros del género.

Key-words - Coleoptera, Tenebrionidae, Diaperinae, Gnathidiini, *Tyrtaeus*, Dominican amber, new fossil species.

Introduction

Fossil tenebrionids - preserved both on stone and in amber - have been described by several authors dating to the Jurassic. KASZAB & SCHAWALLER (1984), DOYEN & POINAR (1994) and VITALI (2007) described as well numerous species from Dominican amber.

The fossil described below belongs to the genus *Tyrtaeus* Champion, 1913. Such genus was originally included in the Colydiidae; later, it was later transferred to the Tenebrionidae Diaperinae Gnathidini (DOYEN & LAWRENCE, 1979). It shows today a relict trans-Antarctic distribution, with relatively few species widespread in Southern America, Madagascar, India, Sumatra and Australia, all associated with mesic forests (DOYEN & POINAR, 1994; DOYEN *et alii*, 1989).

DOYEN & POINAR (1994) have already described four fossil *Tyrtaeus*-species from Dominican amber dating to Early Miocene; nonetheless, according to the current systematics, this genus seems no longer present in the Caribbean.

With the present fossil species, *Tyrtaeus* becomes the most represented genus in Dominican amber, together with *Nesocyrtosoma* Marcuzzi, 1976 (Stenochiinae Cnodalonini) and followed by *Lorelus* Sharp, 1876 (Lagriinae Lupropini) with 4 species.

The geological dates stated in this work agree with the GeoWhen Database of the Physics Department, University of California at Berkeley, according to the 2004 time scale endorsed by the International Commission on Stratigraphy.