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(Coleoptera, Curculionidae)

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BERNICE P. BISHOP MUSEUM

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

VOLUME XII, NUMBER 21

HONOLULU, HAWAII
PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM
December 5, 1936

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INTRODUCTION

Marotiri³, or Bass Rocks, is a group of ten rocks or islets that are probably the remnants of the mountain peaks of a nearly subsided island about 46 miles southeast of Rapa. It marks the southern outpost between southeastern Polynesia and the Antarctic. Most of the rocks are very small and awash in the sea. Four of them, however, rise precipitously to elevations between 200 and 300 feet. It has been considered almost an impossibility to land on any of them, and certainly their barren, formidable appearance would keep all but eager scientists far from them. The two botanists of the Mangarevan Expedition and I, with no little difficulty, succeeded in landing on the southeastern rock. We found there the remnants of the flora and fauna eking out an existence between the myriads of nests of sheerwaters and other sea birds. It is remarkable that I found several endemic insects on this rock whose relatives are inhabitants of the dense forests of the high islands. These species, I believe, adapted themselves to the few low herbs such as *Bidens* and *Portulaca* as they were gradually crowded up on the isolated, deforested peaks while their homes slowly sank beneath the waves.

Among the survivors of this almost exterminated fauna was the following representative of the subfamily Cryptorrhynchinae—the first terrestrial, endemic animal to be described from Marotiri.

Microcryptorrhynchus superstes, new species (fig. 1).

Derm reddish-brown, clothed with a thin amorphous incrustation or a thicker brownish incrustation; scaling whitish, the elytra somewhat vittate.

Head densely clothed with rather large, concave scales. *Rostrum* not carinate, with a few irregular lines of punctures, otherwise smooth, shining and impunctate, much compressed dorsoventrally, sub-spatulate, with a lateral row of erect setae on each side that continues around the inner margins of the eyes

¹ Rhynchophora of Southeastern Polynesia, part 6.

² Mangarevan Expedition Publication 14.

³ For an illustration of two of the rocks see The National Geographic Magazine, vol. 48, no. 4, p. 367, October 1925. This photograph is well worth referring to and will add materially to the interest of the paper.

and two short median rows that may be incomplete owing to abrasion; in the male the scaling continues to the basal third, and the area thus enclosed is somewhat roughened; in the female it is clothed near the base only. *Antennae* with the scape about as long as the first 3 funicular segments; funicular segment 1 one and one half times as long as 2, 3 somewhat shorter than 2, 4 longer than broad, 7 transverse; club as long as the 4 preceding segments. *Prothorax* distinctly longer than broad (3.5:3), constricted before the base and apex, the sub-apical constriction continued broadly across the disk; punctation close and rather fine, the punctures usually concealed by farinaceous scales which are very dense on the sides; a few setae scattered on the disk and a row around the apex. *Elytra* five sevenths as broad as long, evenly arcuate from base to the rather strong sub-apical constriction; the alternate intervals slightly more convex than the others and each with a row of short, stout setae, the scaling denser, giving the elytra a vittate appearance; striae rather coarse, the punctures rounded, about as broad as the intervals near the base. *Legs* stout, densely squamose, with short erect setae. *Sternum* with the mesosternal receptacle deep but hardly cavernous, the side walls complete, terminating at about the posterior margins of the mesocoxae; metasternum with rather large scattered punctures, half as broad as one half the length of the first two ventrites which are closely punctate, rather densely squamose and with numerous erect setae; ventrites 3-5 with setae only. Length, 2-2.2 mm; breadth, 0.8-1.0 mm.

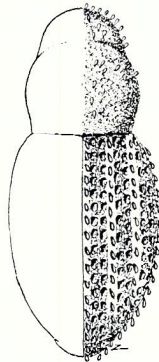


FIGURE 1.—*Microcryptorhynchus superstes*, new species.

Marotiri, Southeast Islet. Holotype, a female stored in Bernice P. Bishop Museum and four paratypes collected by me from *Portulaca* and/or *Bidens*, July 22, 1934, at elevations between 100 and 200 feet.

This species resembles *M. cookei* Zimmerman, from Raivavae, but its elytra are more inflated, their setae shorter, the prothorax is not so coarsely punctured, and the mesosternal receptacle is not deeply cavernous.