

# The first record of the weevil *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906) (Coleoptera, Curculionidae) from Norway

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The weevil *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906) is recorded from Norway for the first time. Two specimens have been found in south-eastern Norway the past two years, Horten in 2011 and Hvaler in 2012. The ecology of the species and notes on its distribution in Northern Europe are briefly discussed. The resemblance with the species *T. troglodytes* (Fabricius, 1787) is also mentioned. *T. thalhammeri* is most likely confined to the plant species *Plantago maritima* (L.) in Norway, and should be searched for in suitable habitats in the Oslofjord region for further description of its distribution in Norway.

Key words: Coleoptera, Curculionidae, *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri*, Norway.

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## Introduction

The weevil *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906) (Figure 1) is recorded from Norway for the first time. The genus (formerly *Ceuthorrhynchidius* (Hansen 1965) ) includes 17 Palearctic species feeding on a variety of host plants. *T. thalhammeri* is previously recorded from the western coast of Sweden in 1984 (Lundberg 1986) and from Denmark in 1972 (Hansen & Mahler 1985). Its distribution in Europe ranges from the Mediterranean to the southern Scandinavia, and show a possible northwards migration of the species in recent time. Its preferred host plants are *Plantago maritima* (L.) and *P. coronopus* (L.), where the larvae feeds on rootstocks or lower stems and pupate in the soil, preferable on coastal saltmarshes (Morris 2008).

## Material

One female was found in Norway, VE, Horten: Reverumpa, 32V E582532 N6589752, 6 June

2011, disturbed shoreline with different kinds of shrubs, grass and herbs One male was found in Norway, Ø, Hvaler: Tohella, 32V E606704 N6549886, 26 June 2012, coastal saltmarsh. Both specimens were found in the vegetation along the shoreline, and the host plant *P. maritima* was present in the areas.

## Discussion

Two other species in the genus, *T. troglodytes* (Fabricius, 1787) and *T. barnevillei* (Grenier, 1866) are previously recorded from Norway, the prior with a wider distribution than the latter. *T. thalhammeri* is easily confused with *T. troglodytes*, and the most reliable characters used to separate the two species are listed in Table 1. The host plants are also different for the two species, *T. troglodytes* is mostly found on *Plantago lanceolata* (L.), while *T. thalhammeri* is found on *P. maritima*. Despite of a wide range of the host plant along the coast of Norway, *T. thalhammeri* has not previously been recorded in



**FIGURE 1.** *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906). Note the numerous white scales on the base of elytra. Photo: Arnstein Staverløkk

Norway. All records from Northern Europe are relatively recent. The first Danish record in 1972 was followed by another record in 1984 (Hansen & Mahler 1985), all from Jutland. The same year, one specimen was recorded from the western coast of Sweden (Lundberg 1998). Today the species is widely distributed in Denmark, but only recorded

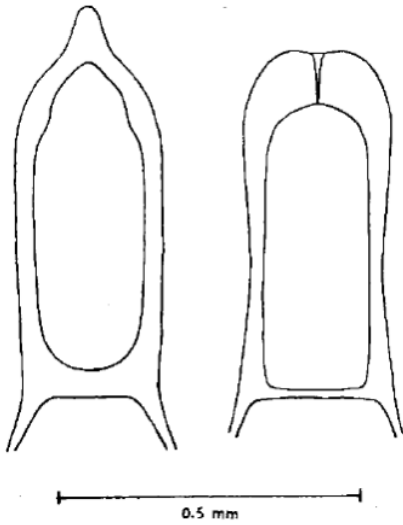
from one locality along the Western coast of Sweden (Sydkoster), not far from the Norwegian localities. This pattern of records may indicate a northwards migration in southern Scandinavia. Resemblance with *T. troglodytes* may also be part of the explanation. This is suggested by Morris (2008) as the cause for the late discovery on The British Isles (in 1982). It is worth mentioning that *T. troglodytes* was also present at the locality in Hvaler, and genitalia was needed to separate them. Lundberg (1988) mentions sifting of the host plants roots as the best method to record the species. This method is effective for many species of weevils, but threatened plant species should be spared. The present distribution of *T. thalhammeri* in Norway and Sweden is shown in Figure 3.

In the Nordic countries, it seems that the species is confined to habitats close to the shoreline. As mentioned by Morris (2008), coastal saltmarshes are preferred (as in Hvaler), but the record from Reverumpa indicates a wider ecological niche. The specimen was found in a popular recreational area, with vegetation dominated by grasses and different kinds of flowers and shrubs. This may indicate that further search for the species should include areas predominated by human activity as well. Further south in Europe (Hungary and Austria), the species is most likely to shift host plant to *P. coronopus*.

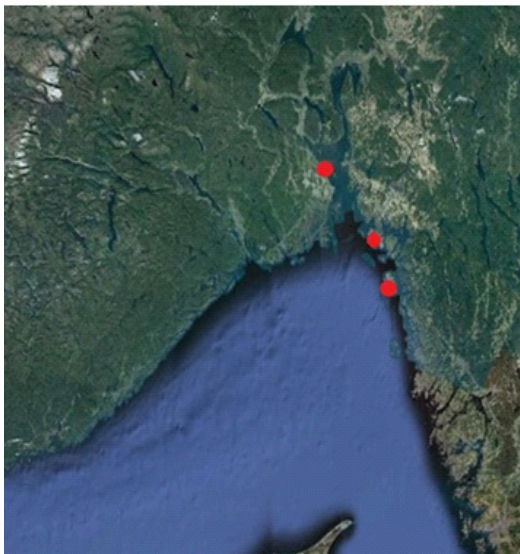
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**TABLE 1.** The most reliable characters used to separate *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906) and *T. troglodytes* (Fabricius, 1787).

Character	<i>T. thalhammeri</i>	<i>T. troglodytes</i>
White scales in basal part of elytra	Numerous scales	Few, if any at all
Shape of pronotum	More rounded at sides	Less rounded at sides
Antennae	Inserted further from apex	Inserted nearer apex
Female fifth ventrite	Median impression	Without a median impression
Female fore tibia	With terminal spur	Without a terminal spur
Male genitalia	See Figure 2	See Figure 2



**FIGURE 2.** Penis of *Trichosirocalus troglodytes* (Fabricius, 1787) (left) and *T. thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906) (right) (after Dieckmann 1972).



**FIGURE 3.** The records of *Trichosirocalus thalhammeri* (Schultze, 1906) in Sweden and Norway. Snapshot from Google Earth.

and distribution of the species. Also thank to Stefan Olberg (Oslo) for comments on the manuscript, Arnstein Staverløkk (Trondheim) for taking the photo of the specimen, and Annica Ellingsen (Drammen) for comments on the language.

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