

SPIXIANA	16	2	145-156	München, 1. Juli 1993	ISSN 0341-8391
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On the Sicilian species of the genus *Faronus* with redescrptions of *F. siculus* Fiori, 1913 and *F. vitalei* Raffray, 1913 *

(Insecta, Coleoptera)

(Studies on the Pselaphidae of Sicily. VI.)

By Giorgio Sabella

Sabella, G. (1993): On the Sicilian species of the genus *Faronus* with redescrptions of *F. siculus* Fiori, 1913 and *F. vitalei* Raffray, 1913 (Insecta, Coleoptera). (Studies on the Pselaphidae of Sicily. VI.). - Spixiana 16/2: 145-156

Of the genus *Faronus*, two species endemic of Sicily, *F. siculus* Fiori, 1913 and *F. vitalei* Raffray, 1913, are critically reviewed. *F. siculus* is redescrbed and the institution of the *hispanus*-group is proposed, characterized by the aedeagal morphology and the male secondary sexual characters on the abdominal sternites. To this group, in addition to *F. siculus*, belong also *F. hispanus* Saulcy, 1870, *F. insularis* Deville, 1908 and *F. insignis* Besuchet, 1958. *F. stolzi* Blattny, 1914 is considered a valid species. *F. vitalei* is redescrbed and compared with the similar species: *F. nicaeensis* Saulcy, 1874, *F. brucki* Saulcy, 1874 and *F. simpliciceps* Reitter, 1893. The female telisternite is used as diagnostic character.

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Introduction

At present three species of *Faronus* Aubè, 1844 are known in Sicily. These are *F. lafertei* Aubè, 1844 which is distributed over most of the Northern regions of the western Mediterranean, *F. siculus* Fiori, 1913 and *F. vitalei* Raffray, 1913 which are both endemic to the island. Even today knowledge on the two latter taxa is unsatisfactory. The original description of *F. siculus* is deficient; there are no illustrations of the aedeagus and a systematic grouping has not been proposed for this species. *F. vitalei* is known only from the holotype, a female collected by Vitale in the Parco della Favorita, Palermo, in December 1912 and from two further specimens (1♂ and 1♀) collected at Altavilla Milicia (Palermo) by Poggi (1991: 221). Therefore, neither the variability or distribution of this species in Sicily is known and the superficial knowledge has not allowed systematic classification of *F. vitalei*. In this study a classification is suggested on the basis of detailed comparisons with other brachypterous species of *Faronus* found in the Mediterranean basin. Over the last years I have collected a conspicuous number of examples of the genus *Faronus* and I believe it is now possible to fill in the gaps and furnish an organic panorama of the Sicilian species of this interesting genus of Pselaphid beetles.

* Study performed with a M.P.I. grant, programme "Fauna of the Western Mediterranean area".