

ANOTHER CLICK BEETLE OF THE GENUS ALAUS IN FLORIDA  
(COLEOPTERA: ELATERIDAE)<sup>1</sup>

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**INTRODUCTION:** IN ENTOMOLOGY CIRCULAR 109, I TREATED THE GENUS ALAUS IN FLORIDA AND RECORDED 2 SPECIES: A. MYOPS (FABRICIUS) AND A. OCLATUS (LINNAEUS). RECENT COLLECTIONS AND AN OLD LITERATURE RECORD INDICATE THAT A THIRD SPECIES, A. PATRICIUS (CANDEZE), IS PRESENT IN THE FLORIDA KEYS.

**DESCRIPTION:** A. PATRICIUS IS VARIABLE IN LENGTH (30-35 MM) AND COLOR BUT IS SIMILAR TO THE OTHER 2 FLORIDA SPECIES. THE BODY COLOR IS DARK BROWN TO BLACK WITH A PATTERN OF WHITISH SCALES ON BOTH DORSAL AND VENTRAL SURFACES (FIG. 1-2). EYE SPOTS OF THE PRONOTUM ARE NEARLY ABSENT IN THE FEMALE, BUT NOT NOTICEABLE (NOT PROMINENT) IN THE MALE. EACH ELYTRON TERMINATES IN 2 SPINES (FIG. 5) IN BOTH SEXES. MALE ANTENNAE ARE LONGER THAN THE PRONOTUM AND MORE PECTINATE (FIG. 2 & 4). FEMALE ANTENNAE ARE ABOUT TWO-THIRDS THE PRONOTAL LENGTH AND LESS PECTINATE (FIG. 1 & 3). THE SCALES ARE SLIGHTLY RUBBED ON ALL SPECIMENS SEEN, SO THAT THE EXACT PATTERN IS NOT VISIBLE. THERE IS A BROWNISH AREA (IRREGULAR BAND) JUST BEHIND THE MIDDLE OF EACH ELYTRON. THERE IS A SURPRISING SIMILARITY OF THE DORSAL COLOR PATTERN TO THAT SEEN IN SEVERAL ORIENTAL SPECIES.

I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FIND ANY REFERENCE TO THE LARVA AND PRESUME THAT IT IS UNDESCRIBED. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE SIMILAR IN GENERAL APPEARANCE TO THAT SHOWN IN FIGURES 4 AND 5 IN CIRCULAR 109 (WOODRUFF 1971).

**BIOLOGY:** ALTHOUGH I HAVE FOUND NO SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE BIOLOGY OF THIS SPECIES, IT IS PROBABLY PREDACEOUS AS A LARVA. THE ADULTS TAKEN IN FLORIDA WERE ALL FOUND ON 25-V-74 AT BLACKLIGHT (ULTRAVIOLET).

**DISTRIBUTION:** SCHAEFFER (1909:149) LISTED THIS SPECIES FROM CUBA AND RECORDED THE FIRST UNITED STATES SPECIMEN FROM CHOKOLOSKEE, FLORIDA. KIMBALL (1965) DISCUSSED MANY RECORDS OF FOREIGN LEPIDOPTERA FROM CHOKOLOSKEE AND CONCLUDED THAT SOME WERE SOLD BY A COMMERCIAL COLLECTOR AND VALIDITY OF THE LABELS WAS DOUBTFUL. IT IS LIKELY THAT SCHAEFFER'S SPECIMEN WAS MISLABELED ALSO, BUT THE 3 RECENTLY COLLECTED SPECIMENS SERVE TO CONFIRM ITS PRESENCE IN FLORIDA, AT LEAST ON KEY LARGO.

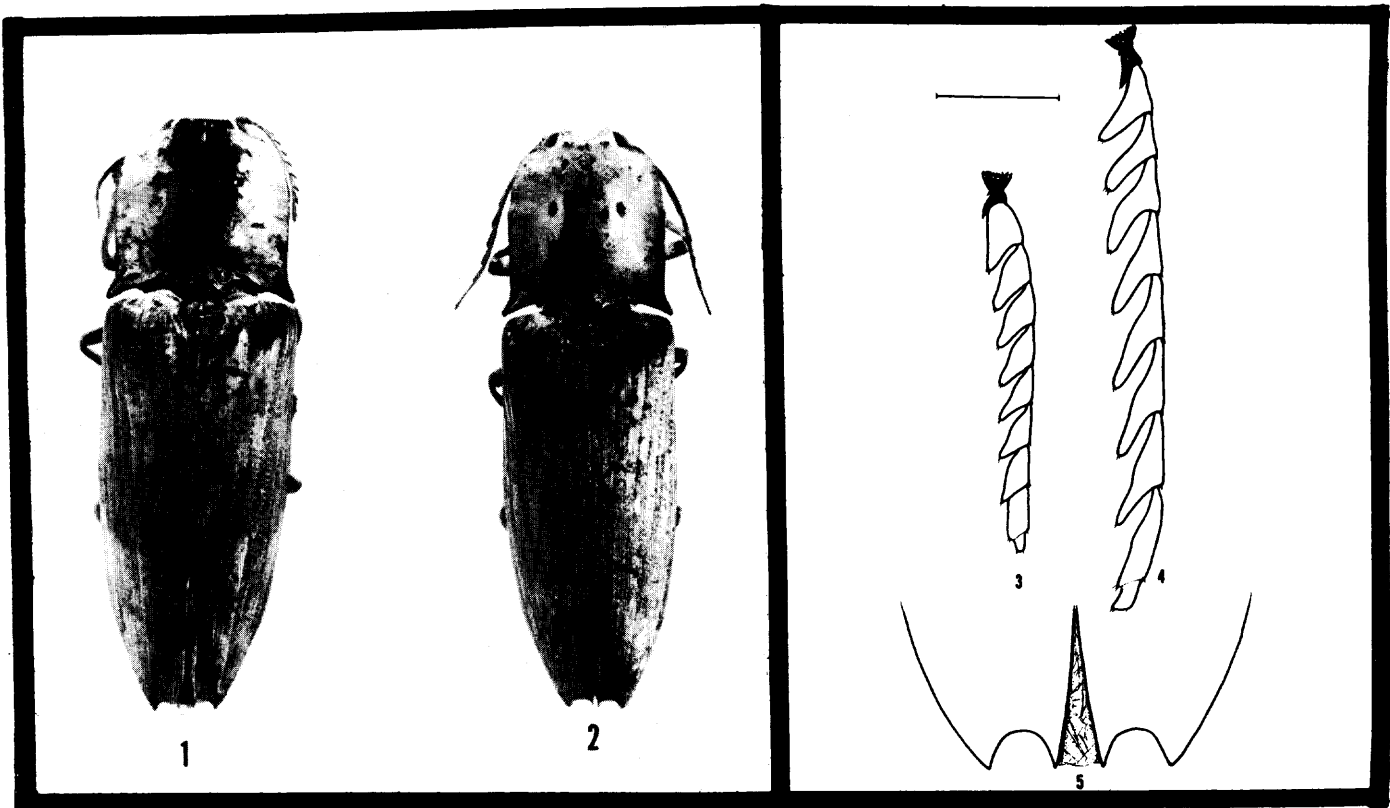


FIG. 1-5 ALAUS PATRICIUS ADULTS: 1) FEMALE, 2) MALE, 3) MALE ANTENNA, 4) FEMALE ANTENNA, 5) ENLARGED ELYTRAL APICES OF FEMALE (SCALE LINE = 2.5 MM FOR FIG. 3-5).

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IN ADDITION TO THE DISTRIBUTION LISTED IN CIRCULAR 109, BECKER (IN LITT.) INDICATED THAT A. OCVLATUS OCCURS IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO AND QUEBEC, AND A. MYOPS IS KNOWN FROM THE MONTREAL AREA TO SOUTHERN MANITOBA.

LENG AND MUTCHLER (1914:426) LISTED A. PATRICIUS (UNDER THE GENERIC NAME CALAIS) FROM CUBA ONLY. BLACKWELDER (1944:282) LISTED A. PATRICIUS FROM "CUBA, I. DE PINOS, U.S.A."

TAXONOMY: A. PATRICIUS IS EASILY DISTINGUISHED FROM THE OTHER FLORIDA SPECIES BY THE VERY SMALL "EYE SPOTS," THE COLOR PATTERN, AND THE DOUBLY SPINED ELYTRAL APICES.

LENG AND MUTCHLER (1914) LISTED IT UNDER THE GENERIC NAME CALAIS, BUT BLACKWELDER (1944) LISTED THAT NAME AS A SUBGENUS OF ALAIUS. THE LATTER PLACED A. LUSCUS OLIVIER AS A SYNONYM OF PATRICIUS, BUT A. LUSCUS FABRICIUS AS A SYNONYM OF OCULATUS.

#### KEY TO FLORIDA SPECIES OF THE GENUS ALAIUS

1. ELYTRAL APICES TERMINATING IN 2 SPINES (FIG. 5); PRONOTAL "EYESPOTS" REDUCED (FIG. 1-2); FLORIDA KEYS AND CUBA..... PATRICIUS CAND.
- 1'. ELYTRAL APICES ROUNDED, NOT DOUBLY SPINOSE, ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES POINTED AT THE SUTURE; PRONOTAL "EYESPOTS" LARGE AND OBVIOUS (ONE-FIFTH TO ONE-THIRD PRONOTAL LENGTH); THROUGHOUT THE STATE..... 2
2. PRONOTAL "EYESPOTS" LESS THAN ONE-FOURTH PRONOTAL LENGTH; BASE COLOR BROWNISH, THE SCALES MOSTLY GREY AND COVERING MORE THAN HALF THE SURFACE; ASSOCIATED WITH PINES..... MYOPS (FABR.)
- 2'. PRONOTAL "EYESPOTS" ABOUT ONE-THIRD PRONOTAL LENGTH; BASE COLOR BLACK, THE SCALES MOSTLY WHITE AND COVERING LESS THAN HALF THE SURFACE; ASSOCIATED WITH HARDWOODS..... OCULATUS (LINN.)

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