

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

Further records for *Ochthebius* (Coleoptera: Hydraenidae) in British ColumbiaREX D. KENNER¹

The family Hydraenidae contains small aquatic beetles somewhat misleadingly called “minute moss beetles”, as only a few species are found associated with moss (Perkins 2001). Hydraenids are commonly found on the margins of streams and can reach high densities in appropriate marginal substrates (Perkins 1976). However, these beetles are found in a wide variety of habitats and some species, particularly in the genus *Ochthebius* Leach, are typically found in lentic habitats (Perkins 1980, 2001).

During an ongoing survey of the aquatic insects of Jericho Park, Vancouver, BC (Needham and Kenner 2007), the author collected several hydraenids while sweeping with an aquatic insect net. Jericho Park is a very popular urban park with a large permanent “main pond” and an ephemeral “meadow pond”. The main pond is in a relatively natural state, surrounded by short grass with trees along one side. It is filled mainly by rainwater and is subject to greatly reduced water levels in the summer months. It supports a large mixed flock of waterfowl in winter, with smaller numbers in the summer. It has a soft mud bottom and contains large amounts of detritus. Parts of the west end of the pond, where the hydraenid specimens were collected, are dominated by dense stands of *Typha* sp. although there are still significant areas of open water except in late summer.

Two of the hydraenids collected in Jericho Park are *Ochthebius brevipennis* Perkins. This species is “primarily a pond species” (Perkins 1980) and is found along the Pacific coast from northern California to southern British Columbia. Perkins lists

only a single record for this species in Canada: BC, Agassiz, 07-iii-1931, H.B. Leech (1 specimen, California Academy of Science, San Francisco, CA). A search of the collections of the Canadian National Collection (Ottawa, ON), the Royal British Columbia Museum (Victoria, BC) and the Spencer Entomological Museum (University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC) (SEM) yielded no additional records. The two Jericho specimens [CANADA, BC, Vancouver, Jericho Park, Main Pond, 49°16.26' N 123°11.70' W, 07-xi-2006, R.D. Kenner] have been deposited in the SEM.

Four specimens identified only as *Ochthebius* sp. were found in the collection of the SEM. Three of these are *O. kaszabi* Janssens, which is widespread in Canada (Perkins 1980). The remaining specimen [BC, Chilcotin (Riske Creek), Box 20-21 (now known as Lake Lye (Topping & Scudder 1977)), 52°1' N 122°29' W, 08-x-1968, G.G.E. Scudder] is *O. lecontei* Perkins. This species is associated with ponds but has an inland distribution extending from western Utah and northeastern Nevada to the southern interior of BC (Perkins 1980). Perkins lists only three Canadian localities for this species: Vernon (type locality), Kamloops and Cranbrook. The physical and chemical characteristics of Lake Lye, a saline lake (conductivity 2900 µS at 25 °C at the time of the collection), are described in Topping & Scudder (1977).

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