

## BRIEF NOTE

### Occurrence of *Monocesta coryli* (Say) in Ohio (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae)<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT.** Recently collected specimens establish that *Monocesta coryli* occurs in Ohio. This species may not have inhabited the state previously.

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In 1954 Wilcox published the "Leaf Beetles of Ohio (Chrysomelidae: Coleoptera)" and listed 293 species as having been collected in the state. Surprisingly, the largest species from Ohio, *Monocesta coryli* (Say), was not on the list. Furthermore, the only published indication that the species might occur in the state is that of Anderson and Papp (1961) who admittedly never saw Ohio specimens. Since 1954, many other species have been reported from Ohio. Most of these newly reported species are probably long-time residents, but were not discovered earlier because of inadequate collecting. However, other species such as *Diabrotica virgifera* LeConte (western corn rootworm) and *Oulema melanopa* (Linnaeus) (cereal leaf beetle) are of particular interest because they have recently extended their ranges to include Ohio. *Monocesta coryli* probably belongs to this second category.

*Monocesta coryli*, also known as the larger elm leaf beetle, is among the largest leaf beetle species in the United States. Because of its conspicuous size, it is likely to be collected wherever it occurs. However, it was not until August 4, 1979 that James Sargent and Charles A.

Triplehorn collected a specimen from Shawnee State Forest in Scioto County. They recognized it as belonging to this species and thereby established for the first time that *M. coryli* occurs in Ohio. No special effort was made at that time to discover additional specimens. Nonetheless, specimens from Athens, Gallia, Lawrence, Pike, and Ross counties soon appeared in 4-H collections at the 1981 Ohio State Fair. Many specimens have been collected subsequently from various localities in southern Ohio. The only obvious explanations for this recent abundance and previous absence of specimens are that *M. coryli* is a new addition to the Ohio fauna, or that the size of the population has increased dramatically during recent years.

The following specimens are in either the Collection of Insects and Spiders at The Ohio State University (OSU) or my personal collection (SMCC): OHIO: Adams Co., 3-VIII-1980, L. Riffle (1 female, OSU); Fairfield Co., O.S.U. Barnebey Center, 12-VII-1983, B. S. & S. M. Clark (1 male, SMCC); Hocking Co., Ash Cave, 24-VII-1983, S. M. Clark (1 male, SMCC); Hocking Co., Logan, 20-VII-1981, Virginia Cook (1 female, OSU); Pickaway Co., Circleville, 9-VIII-1981 (1 male, 2 females, OSU); Ross Co., Chillicothe, 9-VIII-1981 (3 males, 2 females, OSU); Ross Co., Tar Hollow, 4-VIII-1984, B. S. & S. M. Clark, on *Ulmus* sp. (15 males, 17 females, SMCC); Ross Co., Tar Hollow St. For., Ross Hollow Campground, 20/21-VII-1984, R. L. Aalbu (2 males, 6 females, SMCC); Scioto County, Shawnee State Forest, 4-VIII-1979, J. Sargent (1 male, OSU).

All of the Ohio specimens lack the metallic blue areas on the elytra that are characteristic of most specimens from other parts of the range. This provides further evidence that *M. coryli* is a recent introduction into Ohio, the atypical color possibly reflecting the restricted gene pool of a few founding individuals.

Ohio specimens of *M. coryli* are easily distinguished from other leaf beetle species by their large size (10.0-16.0 mm in length). They are usually broadest in the posterior half of the elytra, and their color is pale, yellowish brown. The larvae feed on the leaves of elm (*Ulmus*) and hazel (*Corylus*). I encourage further studies of this species, especially those that will provide insight as to why its range may have only recently included Ohio.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Anderson, L. D. and C. S. Papp 1961 The larger elm leaf beetle, *Monocesta coryli* (Say) (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae). Proc. Ent. Soc. Washington 63: 203-207.  
Wilcox, J. A. 1954 Leaf beetles of Ohio (Chrysomelidae: Coleoptera). Ohio Biological Survey Bulletin 43: 353-506.

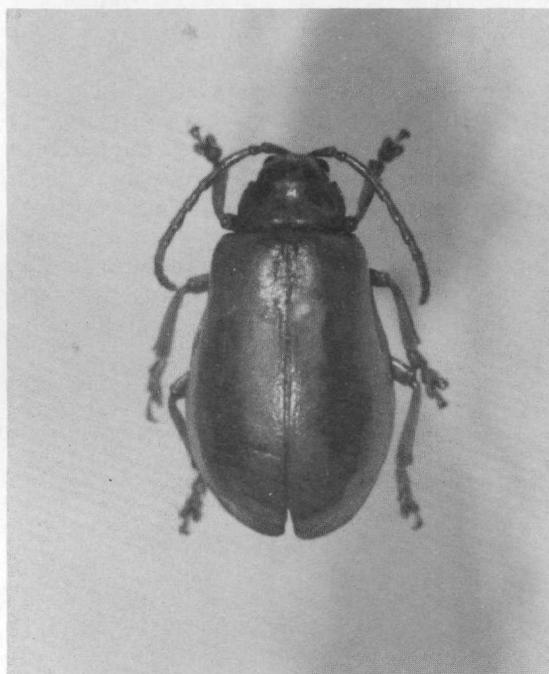


FIGURE 1. *Monocesta coryli* (Say).