

THE COLEOPTERA OF CANADA.

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VIII. THE HALIPLIDÆ AND DYTISCIDÆ OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

The above-mentioned families of carnivorous water beetles are taken up here by request of the Editor and Committee, because of the great difficulty most students of Coleoptera, especially if they are beginners, find in identifying any of their captures in these groups, or even in separating the species with approximate accuracy. It is to be feared that with many it will prove difficult to follow the tables herewith presented; but they have been made as plain as circumstances will allow, and care has been taken to follow the best authorities in the selection of characters supposed to mark the respective species, so that by diligent attention to details the user of the paper may hope to co-relate his collection with our lists.

The HALIPLIDÆ which may be considered first, includes a small number of beetles easily recognized by the very convex body, narrowed and often pointed before and behind; in colour yellowish, with numerous black spots on the thorax and elytra. The antennæ are ten-jointed, situated on the front before the eyes, glabrous and filiform; the legs are slender, not fitted for vigorous swimming, the hind coxæ furnished with broad plates, contiguous internally, which conceal the posterior legs at their basal half, and from three to six ventral segments. These little creatures, which, from their peculiar spotted appearance, suggest aquatic lady-birds, may be found very commonly during the summer in ponds where plant life abounds, especially *Algae*. On account of their feeble swimming power they are easily captured by raking the mass of vegetable matter on to the bank, when the beetles, on crawling out to regain the water, may be secured.

Only two genera are represented in Canada: *Haliplus*, which has the elytral interstices punctate and the last joint of the palpi small, subulate, and *Cnemidotus*, without interstitial elytral punctures, the terminal palpal joint conical, longer than the third. The species are difficult to define; the following characters, however, are those accepted as specific by Mr. Crotch, in his "Revision."

HALIPLUS, Latr.

A. Thorax without basal impression; larger species.

b. Head with bilobed black spot on the vertex; elytral striæ not deeper at base (.15 in.)..... *cribrarius*, Lec.