

## Group PTILODACTYLINI.

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*Ptilodactyla*, Latreille, Règne Anim. ed. 2, iv. p. 461 (1829); Lacordaire, Gen. Col. iv. p. 279; Horn, Trans. Am. Ent. Soc. viii. p. 90.

This neglected genus includes a very large number of species, and it is one of the most characteristic forms of Coleoptera in Tropical America, extending northwards to the Southern United States and southwards to Argentina. Of the forty-four described species, four only are from the Old World, the remainder being all American, these latter including two from the Southern States, four from Colombia, seven from Guiana, sixteen from Peru\*, four from Brazil, one from Argentina, and six from Cuba. Not a single species, therefore, has up to the present time been described from within our limits, whence no fewer than fifty-nine are now recorded; and, judging from the numerous specimens left unnamed for want of sufficient material, and the limited area within which many of the others have been found, it is probable that more than one hundred species exist in Central America. To *Ptilodactyla* belong many very closely allied species, several of which can only be distinguished with certainty by the form of the fifth ventral segment in the males, or, in some cases, by that of the tarsal claws in this sex. The various species may be grouped by the form of the claws (when both sexes are available for examination), or by that of the scutellum—characters ignored by most of the writers on these insects.

The antennæ have joints 4–10† each furnished with an articulated ramus in the males, and are simply serrate in the females; in three species (*P. antennalis*, *P. humerosa*, and *P. tenuis*) the third joint is considerably shorter than the fourth. The apical joint of the maxillary palpi varies a little in length according to the species, but it is never greatly elongated, as in the males of the two insects here placed under *Lachnodactyla*. The eyes are large, often larger and more prominent in the males than in the females. The thorax is transverse, in most of the species semicircular or subconical in shape, and usually compressed at the sides before the middle, the anterior (as well as the lateral) margin being sometimes very prominent; the base is trisinate or bisinate, and usually more or less denticulate, often with a projecting tooth in the centre fitting into a notch in the front of the scutellum. The scutellum usually has a deep notch in front, and sometimes a well-defined, narrow, median sulcus as well, or is even broadly and deeply sulcate down the middle; in a few species there is no trace of emargination in front; it varies in size and also in shape, but the general shape is cordiform. The elytra in most of the species are very acutely margined at the sides; in *P. caudata* they differ in form in the two sexes. The thorax (and sometimes the other parts of the body

\* Co-types of seven of these have been examined:—*P. vilis*, *P. præcellens*, *P. lamellifera*, *P. heterophya*, *P. angusta*, *P. secedens*, and *P. minuta*, Kirsch; also *P. cruciata*, Kirsch, from Colombia.

† Not 3–10, as stated by Lacordaire.