

## **Beetles (Coleoptera) of the Shell Picture Card series: Buprestidae**

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**Abstract:** Cards depicting Buprestidae species (Coleoptera) from Australia in the Shell Picture Card series entitled *Australian Beetles* (1965) are reviewed in this paper. The original cards are supplied as illustrations with the original accompanying data. Comments on these data are provided wherever applicable.

### **Introduction**

During the early to mid 1960's the Shell Petroleum Company issued a number of Picture Card series dealing with the fauna and flora of Australia. The cards were handed out free at Shell service stations across the country (when petrol stations did give proper service!) and were housed in an album which was purchased separately. This paper reviews the Buprestidae (Coleoptera) of the *Australian Beetles* series (card numbers 301-360)(1965). The other beetle groups will be dealt with in other papers. The reason for these papers is to provide the illustrations and data for future workers since the Shell Picture Card series are rare and have seldom been referred to as a result. The nomenclature used here generally follows that of Bellamy (2003).

### **Species**

Card no. 315 - Regal Jewel Beetle, *Calodema regale* (Laporte & Gory)  
[as *Calodema regalis* L.& G.]



Card data: "This magnificent insect is extremely well named because it is one of the most beautiful members of the Jewel Beetle family (Buprestidae). It inhabits far Northern Queensland and is generally regarded as rare. Little is known of its habits or life history, but, most probably, its larvae are borers in the forest timbers of Cape York."

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Comments: Reviews and data on the biology of this species have been provided by Hawkeswood (1987) and Hawkeswood (2006a). Data from this card were not included in these reviews. Despite being the ultimate prize of certain Australian insect collectors, still very little is known about its biology and behaviour. The species also occurs in the subtropical rainforests of south-eastern Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Card no. 317 - Yellow Spotted (Jewel) Beetle, *Austrophorella quadrisignata* (Saunders)  
[as *Pseudotaenia quadrisignata* Saund.]



Card data: “Another of the family Buprestidae, this magnificent beetle measures 1 1/4 [1.25] inches or more in length, and is metallic green with four powdery yellow spots on the wing cases. Unlike the majority of Jewel Beetles, it frequents foliage rather than flowers. It occurs in north and central Queensland where it may easily be collected from trees known locally as Red Ash and Sarsaparilla. This beetle flies in mid-summer, and its larvae are borers.”

Comments: A review on the biology of this species has been provided by Pullen (1987)(as *Pseudotaenia*) & Bily & Volkovitsh (2003)(as *Austrophorella*). Red Ash is *Alphitonia excelsa* (Rhamnaceae) and Sarsaparilla is *Alphitonia petrei* (Rhamnaceae)(Pullen, 1987). The host data for this card were most likely provided by Mr E.E. Adams, the well known collector from Edungalba, central Queensland, since the host information does not appear to have been published previous to the issue of the Shell Picture Card series (1965).

Card no. 321 - Banksia Jewel Beetle, *Cyrioides imperialis* (Fabricius)  
[as *Cyria imperialis* Fab.]

Card data: “This beautiful orange yellow and black-banded beetle measures well over one inch in length. It is a native of Victoria and New South Wales, and is found mainly near the coast where there are native honeysuckles and banksias, in the wood of which it breeds. The adult beetle flies in the hot sun during December and January, frequenting the foliage; the family is Buprestidae.”

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Comments: A review and data on the biology of this species have been provided by Hawkeswood (2007). Data from this card were not included in that review.



Card no. 323 - Yellow Striped Jewel Beetle, *Cyphogastra pictor* (Laporte & Gory)  
[as *Gyphogastra* (sic) *pictor* L.& G.]



Card data: "This is a beautiful Jewel beetle of metallic green with scaly yellow longitudinal bands. It is an inhabitant of northern Queensland, and the adults may frequently be collected from foliage of the guava bush which grows along many roads in Queensland. It is a summer insect and its larvae are borers. Family Buprestidae."

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Comments: A review on the biology and a larval host plant of this species has been provided by Hawkeswood (1986). Data from this card were not included in that review. The “guava bush” mentioned is *Rhodomyrtus psidioides* (Myrtaceae), although the reference may possibly also refer to “cocky apple” (*Planchonia careya*, Lecythidaceae), which was listed as an adult food plant by Brooks (1969). The record of guava bush for *Rhodomyrtus* therefore requires further investigation.

Card no. 327 - Red Spotted Jewel Beetle, *Stigmodera cancellata* (Donovan)



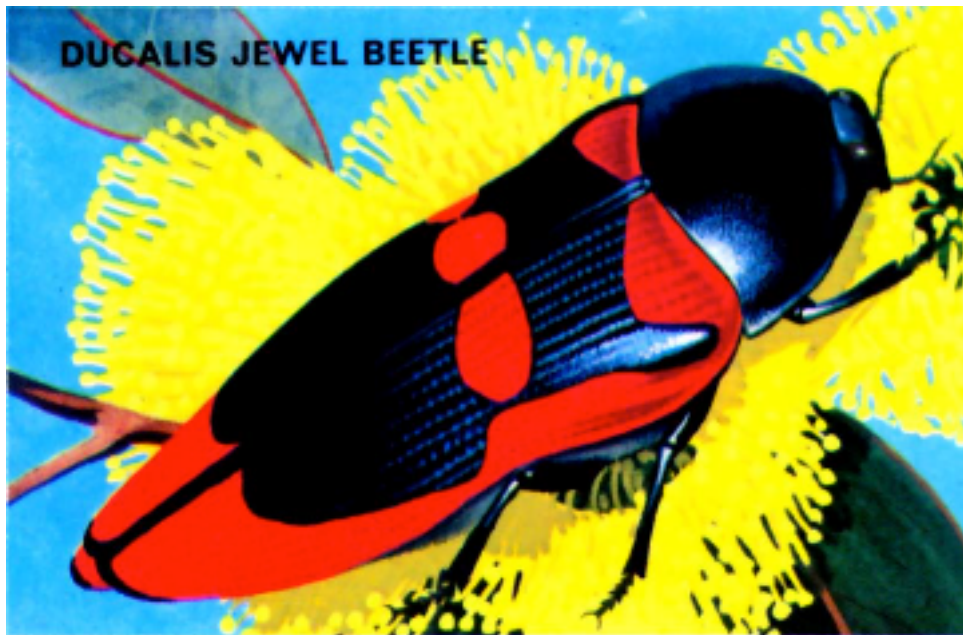
Card data: “This is a truly magnificent, reddish and metallic blue spotted Jewel Beetle. It is an inhabitant of Western Australia, along the coastal region from about Geraldton to Albany, and may be found in October and November on native flowers, particularly those of the Geraldton Wax Plant. Specimens of this beetle, belonging to the family Buprestidae, are much sought after. Larvae of the Red Spotted Jewel (Beetle) are borers of native trees.”

Comments: The Geraldton Wax Plant is *Chamaelaucium uncinatum* (Myrtaceae). A review of larval host records for the species was provided by Hawkeswood & Peterson (1982).

Card no. 331 - Ducalis Jewel Beetle, *Temognatha ducalis* (Carter)  
[as *Stigmodera ducalis* Cart.]

Card data: “This is another of the West (sic) Australian species of Jewel Beetles. It is found during the hot summer months on the flowers of Mallee and various eucalypts. Like other species of its family, Buprestidae, it varies much in colour, some specimens being almost entirely black. It varies in size from about 1 inch to 1 3/4 inches [1.75 inches]. Larvae are timber borers.”

Comments: Very little has been published since on the biology of this species. Hawkeswood & Peterson (2004) recorded adults of this species from flowers of *Eucalyptus foecunda* in the East Hyden and Forrestania areas of arid Western Australia. Data from this card were not included.



Card no. 350 - Black Banded Jewel Beetle, *Temognatha murrayi* (Gemming & Harold)  
[as *Stigmodera murrayi* G.& H.]



Card data: "This is a Jewel Beetle of the larger species, measuring more than 1 1/4 inches [1.25 inches] in length. A native of Western Australia, it appears during the summer months and frequents the flowers of Mallee and other eucalypt trees. Though not regarded as rare, it is much sought after. Individual specimens vary greatly in the extent of the black transverse bands. Family is Buprestidae."

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Comments: Observations on the adult host plants of this species have been provided by Hawkeswood (1982). Data from this card were not included in that review. Hawkeswood & Peterson (2004) recorded adults of this species from flowers of *Eucalyptus foecunda* in the East Hyden and Forrestania areas of arid Western Australia. The orange coloration shown on the pronotum and elytra in the Shell Picture Card above is not true to life, the living colour being bright yellow.

Card no. 356 - Giant Jewel Beetle, *Julodimorpha bakewelli* (White)

Card data: "This very large beetle is duller in colouration than most of the Jewel Beetles but is notable for its size, its length exceeding 2 inches. Found during the summer months, it is an inhabitant of the Mallee country of southern Australia, from Victoria to Western Australia. Its larvae are borers in timber, mainly in the root crowns of species of Mallee eucalypt trees. Family Buprestidae."

Comments: A review on the biology and host plants has been provided by Hawkeswood (2005). Data from this card was not included in that review.



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