

***Tetropium gabrieli* Weise (Coleoptera, Cerambycidae), an interesting import species new to Finland**

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On the 17th of April 1990, a container including mixture of various foreign tea brands shipped via England was unloaded in the storehouse of the coffee and tea company Oy Paulig Ab in Vuosaari, Helsinki. The tea had been loaded on pallets made of British larch planks infested by a cerambycid beetle, and in the warmth of the storehouse the insects began to emerge from the planks. According to personnel working in the storehouse, several dozens of the beetles emerged during the next few days.

The foreman of the storehouse became worried about possible consequences of the incidence, and contacted the Zoological Museum for identification of the beetles. A sample of the insects was brought to the museum, and Dr. Hans Silfverberg identified the species as *Tetropium gabrieli* Weise, a species now recorded from Finland for the first time. The too-low relative humidity of the storehouse as an emerging site had caused developmental defects in the elytra of several individuals.

The natural range of this cerambycid beetle comprises Western and Central Europe, and the main host plant is larch (*Larix*), but occasional infestation of pine and spruce has also been observed (genera *Pinus*, *Picea* and *Abies*) (Bílý & Mehl 1989). Nearest to Finland the species occurs locally and rarely in Denmark. In Sweden, the

beetle was found for the first time in 1984, and that case involved larch timber imported from southern West Germany and Czechoslovakia to a pulp mill in Kalix, Norrbotten (Lundberg 1986a, 1986b). No records are known from the Baltic countries (Silfverberg 1979). Although it is rather improbable that *T. gabrieli* would be able to settle permanently in Finland, the possibility was prevented by destroying the planks of the pallets by burning.

References

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