

**Observations on Pollination of Various Heathland Plants by  
*Metriorrhynchus rhipidius*(Macleay) (Coleoptera: Lycidae) in  
Eastern New South Wales, Australia, with a Review of Some  
Feeding Records for *Metriorrhynchus***

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**ABSTRACT**

*Metriorrhynchus rhipidius* (Macleay) (Coleoptera: Lycidae) has been observed feeding and presumably pollinating the flowers of a number of heathland plants on sand dunes in central, coastal New South Wales. These species are: *Leucopogon lanceolatus* (Sm.) R.Br., *Leucopogon virgatus* (Labill.) R.Br., *Brachyloma daphnoides* (Epacridaceae), *Leptospermum polygalifolium* Salisb. (Myrtaceae) and *Conospermum taxifolium* (Proteaceae). The beetles were aggregated in various areas where the food plants were profusely flowering and were absent from most areas within the sand dune system. The mouthparts of *Metriorrhynchus* are suitable for obtaining nectar from the more tubular-shaped flowers of *Leucopogon*, *Brachyloma* and *Conospermum*. The open bowl-shaped flowers of *Leptospermum* are easily accessible for the *Metriorrhynchus* beetles.

*Key words:* Coleoptera, Lycidae, *Metriorrhynchus*, food plants, pollination, Australia.

**INTRODUCTION**

The genus *Metriorrhynchus* is the dominant genus of the family Lycidae (Coleoptera) in Australia. The beetles are well-known to be distasteful to predators (or at least presumed so) and there are many Batesian mimics of this group amongst other insect groups (see discussions and illustrations in Nilcholson, 1927; Froggatt, 1907, Tillyard, 1926; Mckeown, 1942; Csiro, 1970; Hawkeswood, 1987). The adults of *Metriorrhynchus* are often seen during summer months in coastal areas of Australia but little is known of even their basic biology. A few authors have noted