

THE GARDEN FLEAHOPPER GENUS *HALTICUS*
(HEMIPTERA: MIRIDAE): RESURRECTION OF
AN OLD NAME AND KEY TO SPECIES OF
THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

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Abstract.—The plant bug *Halticus canus* (Distant), known from Guatemala, Mexico, and Nicaragua, is resurrected from the synonymy of the garden flea hopper, *H. bractatus* (Say). Male genitalia for both species are illustrated, and a key is provided to separate the four species of *Halticus* known from the western Hemisphere: *H. apterus* (F.), *H. bractatus*, *H. canus*, and *H. intermedius* (Uhler). A record of *H. bractatus* from Hawaii is new for the state.

Halticus bractatus (Say), an important crop pest, has been the subject of numerous economic investigations. Ashmead's (1887) observation of *bractatus* (as *Rhinacloa citri* Ashmead) attacking orange trees in Florida is the first record documenting damage by this species. Chittenden (1902) apparently coined the common name "garden flea hopper" because of its preference for many truck or garden crops and for its ability to hop. Beyer (1921) summarized most of the literature relating to this pest (as *Halticus citri*), reviewed distribution and synonymies, described the immature stages, and listed 41 host plants. *Halticus bractatus* prefers plants in the family Fabaceae such as alfalfa, beans, and clovers, but it will readily feed on many others, including barley, corn, oats, wheat, eggplant, potato, tobacco, and cotton. The flea hopper occurs throughout much of North (eastern and midwestern United States), Central, and South America (Carvalho 1958), and the West Indies (Maldonado, 1969; Alayo, 1974).

While identifying a collection of Neotropical Miridae from Mexico, I discovered a species of *Halticus* that appeared similar to but larger than *bractatus*, the only species of the genus known from this region. Perusal of the literature revealed that six names have been placed in synonymy under *bractatus*; one of these names is here considered to represent a distinct species.

Herein, I resurrect the name *canus* Distant for a species occurring in southern Mexico and Central America, compare *canus* to *bractatus*, illustrate male genitalia of both species, and provide a revised key to separate the four species of *Halticus* now recognized from the Western hemisphere.

Halticus canus (Distant)

Figs. 4-6

Calocoris canus Distant, 1893: 430.

Calocoris canus: Van Duzee, 1907: 30.