

Towards a robust taxonomy of the *Irenimus* broad-nosed weevils (Coleoptera: Curculionidae)---Morphology, sequences and biogeography

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Eligible for student prize

The broad-nosed weevil genus *Irenimus* is one of the larger genera of weevils in New Zealand. The genus is found throughout New Zealand, though they find their greatest diversity in the southern half of the South Island. They are found in forest-edge, shrubland and grassland habitats, with an altitudinal range that spans over 2000 m. A number of species are present in agricultural pastures, where they can attain high numbers and occasionally cause problems. A number of species are also susceptible to parasitism by parasitoid wasps introduced to control adventive weevil pest species. All these characteristics make the group of great economic, environmental and evolutionary interest; however research on the group is hindered by an outdated taxonomy and there being no modern tools for the identification of *Irenimus* species. My PhD seeks to remedy this by revising the genus using morphological and DNA sequence data. Initial indications are that the genus will be tractable; though there remain some challenging species groups.

