

The beetle fauna of the island of Koltur and a new record for the Faroe Islands

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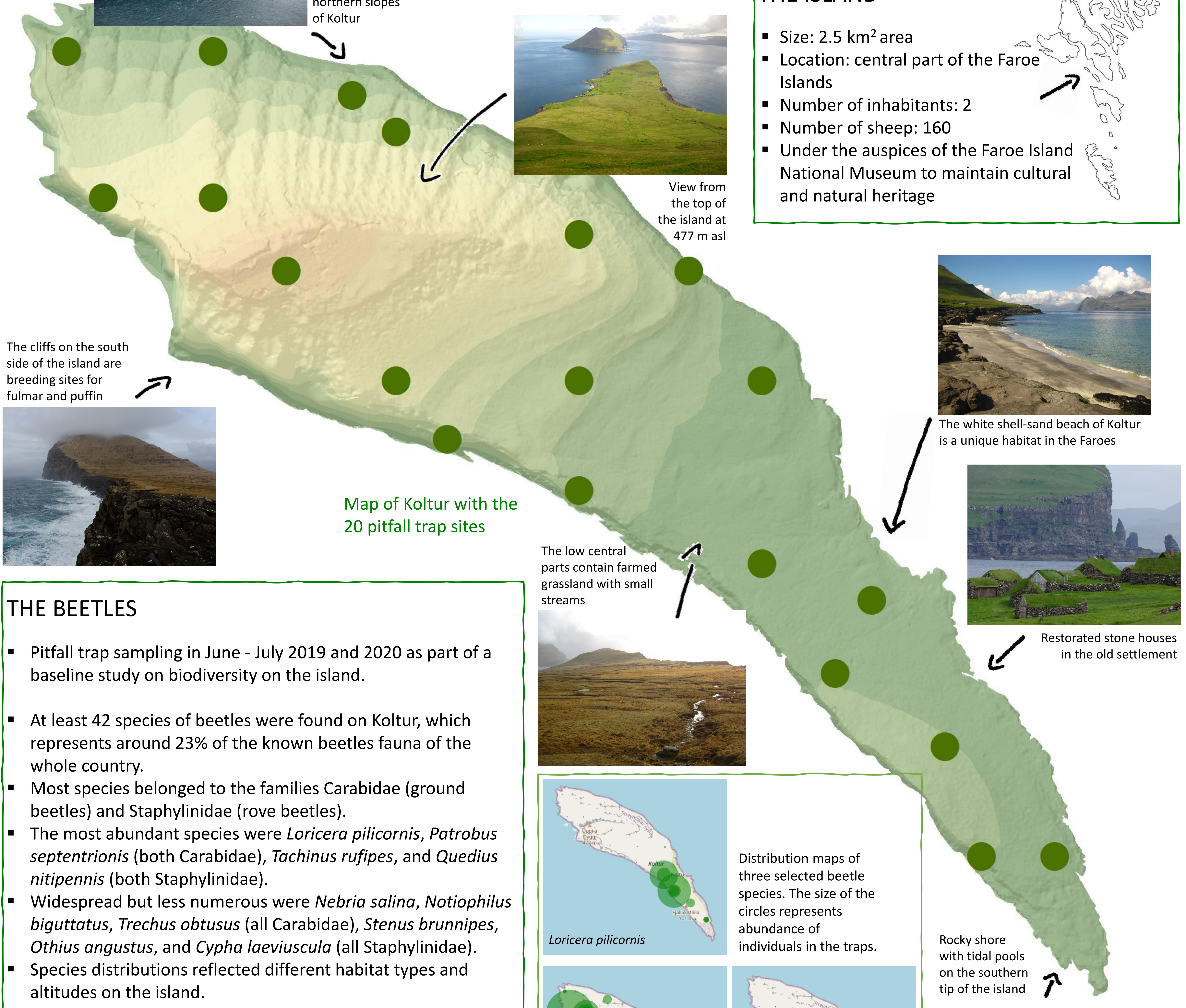
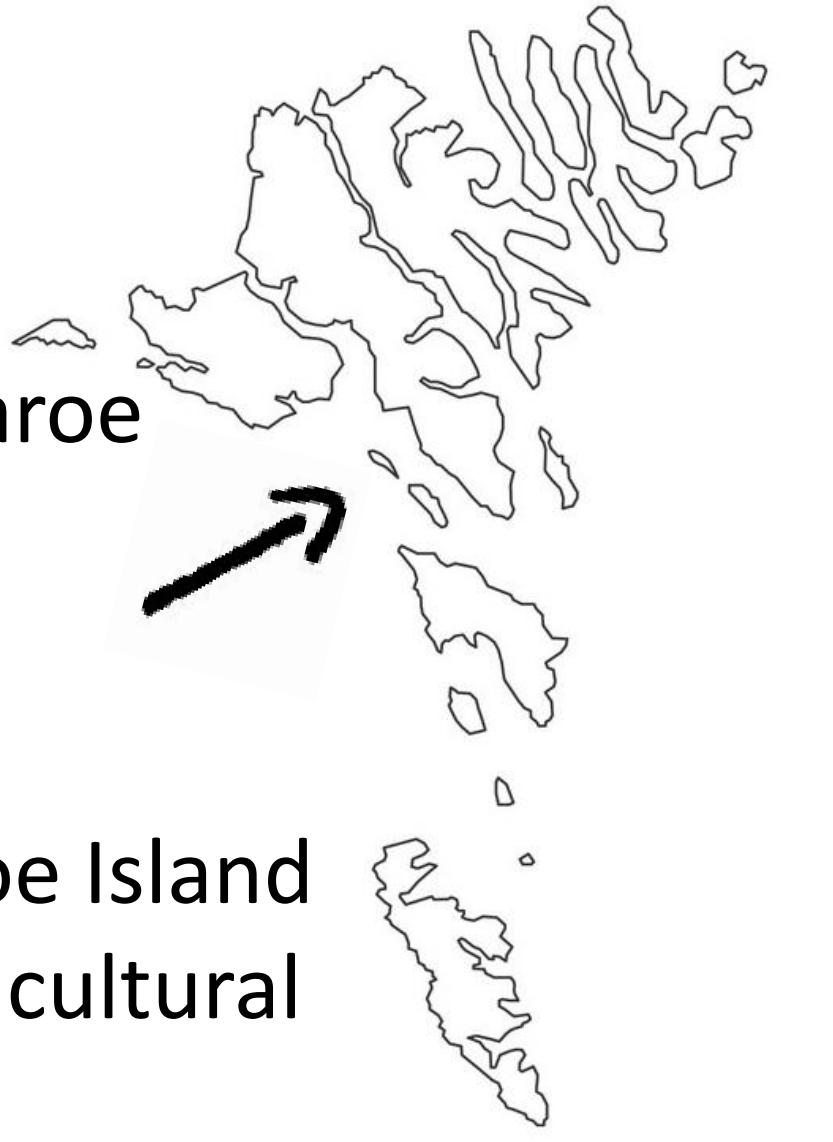
The steep northern slopes of Koltur



View from the top of the island at 477 m asl

THE ISLAND

- Size: 2.5 km² area
- Location: central part of the Faroe Islands
- Number of inhabitants: 2
- Number of sheep: 160
- Under the auspices of the Faroe Island National Museum to maintain cultural and natural heritage



Map of Koltur with the 20 pitfall trap sites

The cliffs on the south side of the island are breeding sites for fulmar and puffin



The white shell-sand beach of Koltur is a unique habitat in the Faroes



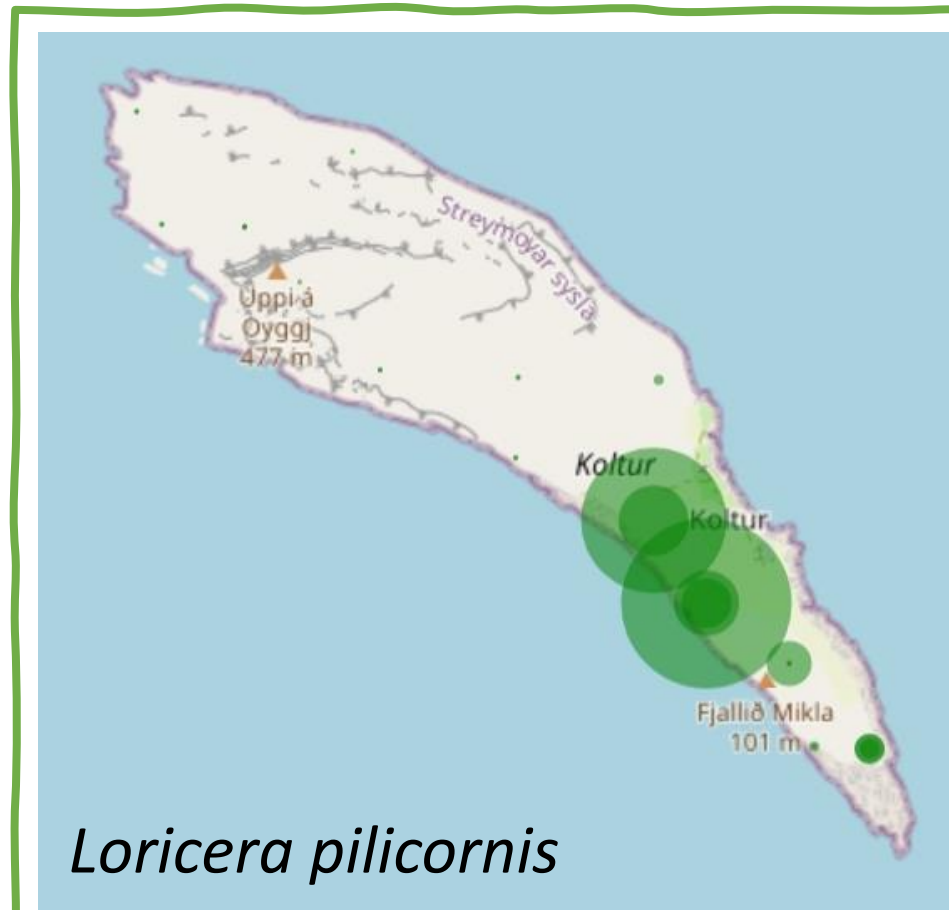
Restored stone houses in the old settlement

The low central parts contain farmed grassland with small streams



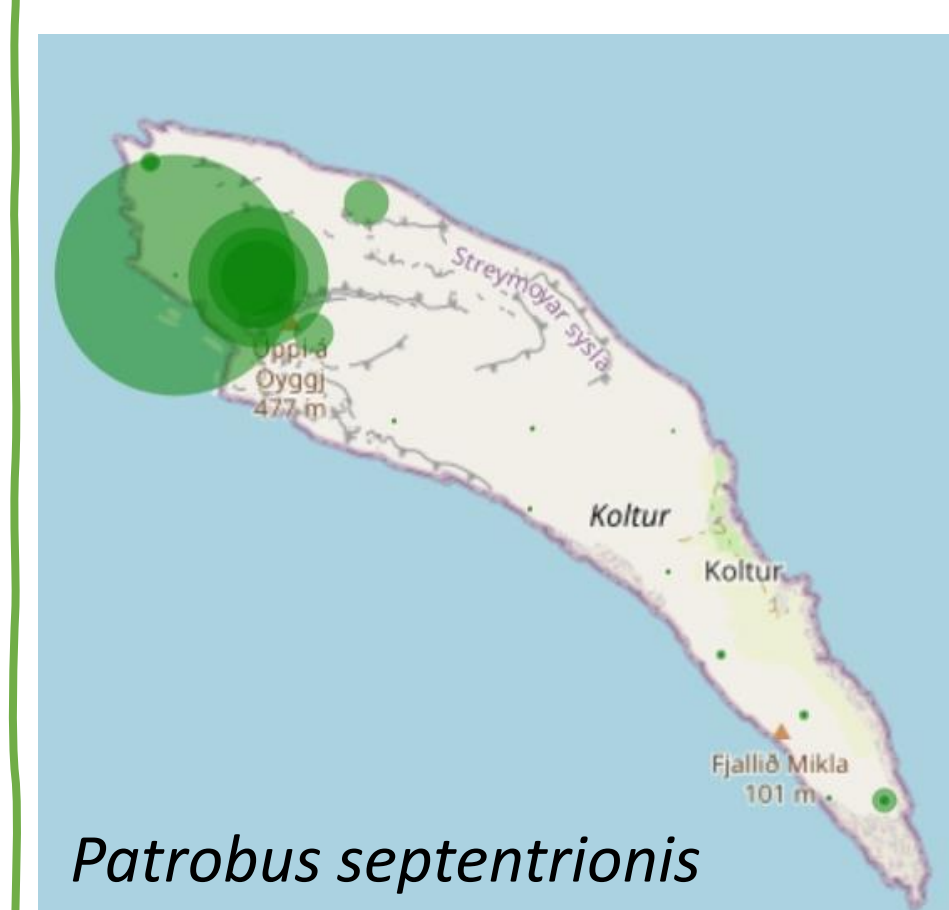
THE BEETLES

- Pitfall trap sampling in June - July 2019 and 2020 as part of a baseline study on biodiversity on the island.
- At least 42 species of beetles were found on Koltur, which represents around 23% of the known beetles fauna of the whole country.
- Most species belonged to the families Carabidae (ground beetles) and Staphylinidae (rove beetles).
- The most abundant species were *Loricera pilicornis*, *Patrobus septentrionis* (both Carabidae), *Tachinus rufipes*, and *Quedius nitipennis* (both Staphylinidae).
- Widespread but less numerous were *Nebria salina*, *Notiophilus biguttatus*, *Trechus obtusus* (all Carabidae), *Stenus brunripes*, *Othius angustus*, and *Cypha laeviuscula* (all Staphylinidae).
- Species distributions reflected different habitat types and altitudes on the island.

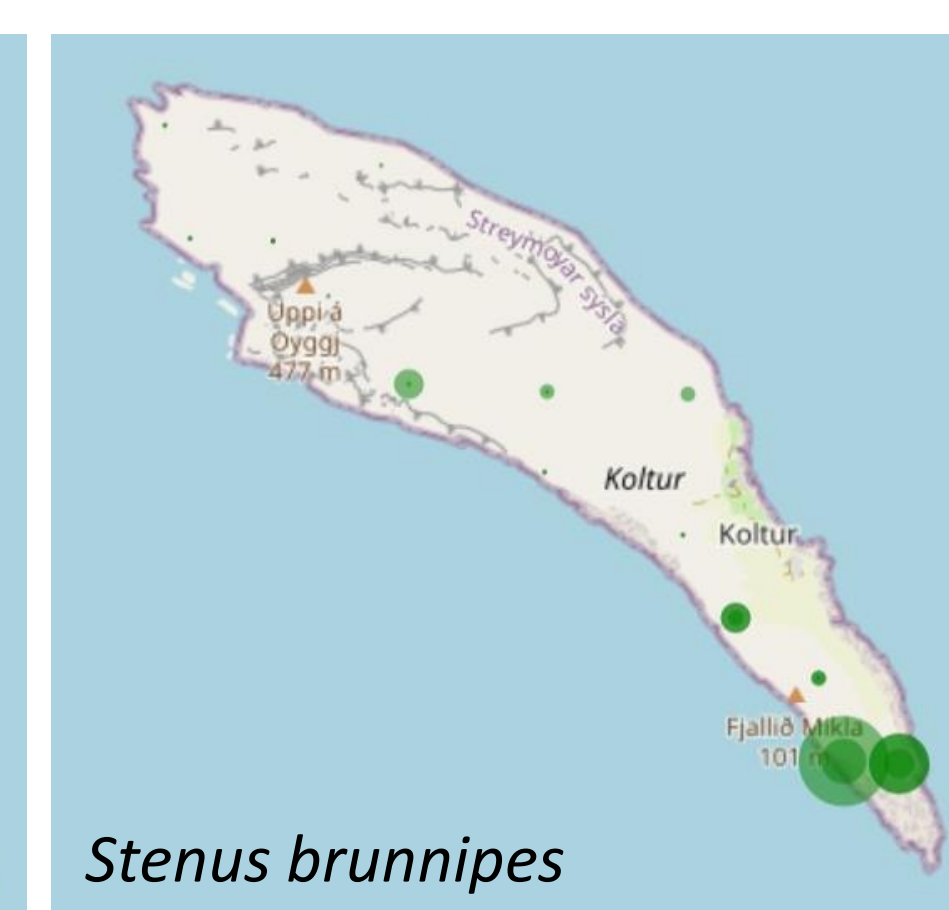


Loricera pilicornis

Distribution maps of three selected beetle species. The size of the circles represents abundance of individuals in the traps.



Patrobus septentrionis



Stenus brunripes

Rocky shore with tidal pools on the southern tip of the island



THE FUTURE

- Koltur Nature Reserve with research field station and visitor centre - the first of its kind in the Faroes.
- Sheep will be removed from parts of the island to allow natural plant succession without grazing pressure.
- Long-term terrestrial monitoring of plant, bird and invertebrate diversity.

THE NEW ONE

- Dung beetle *Aphodius borealis* (Scarabaeidae; Aphodiinae) as a first record for the Faroe Islands
- 15 individuals were collected in June 2019 from sheep dung on Koltur.
- *A. borealis* received the Faroese name Norðurþøðklukka.
- There are now four species of dung beetles (Aphodiinae) known from the Faroes.

