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Autor: Háva, Jíí
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Description of a new *Laricobius* species from Nepal (Coleoptera, Derodontidae, Laricobinae)

by Jiří Háva

Abstract. A new species *Laricobius wittmeri* sp.nov. from Nepal is described, illustrated and compared with related species. *Laricobius loebli* Jelínek et Háva, 2001 is newly recorded from northern India (Darjeeling). A key to Himalayan species is provided.

Key words. Coleoptera – Derodontidae – *Laricobius* – taxonomy – new species – Nepal

Introduction

A review of the family Derodontidae was published by LAWRENCE & HLAVAC (1979), according to which the genus *Laricobius* Rosenhauer, 1846 contained 17 Holarctic species. They are predators of aphids, mostly of the family Adelgidae. A key to the Himalayan species of the genus, including the description of a new species, was published recently by HÁVA & JELÍNEK (2000) and JELÍNEK & HÁVA (2001). In the present paper, a new species of the genus is described from Nepal.

Material and methods

The size of the beetles or their body parts can be useful in species recognition and thus the following measurements were made:

- total length (TL) linear distance from anterior margin of head to apex of elytra
- pronotal length (PL) maximum length measured from anterior margin to posterior margin
- pronotal width (PW) maximum linear transverse distance
- elytral length (EL) linear distance from shoulder to apex of elytron
- elytral width (EW) maximum linear transverse distance

Specimens of the species described here are provided with a red, printed label with text as follows: “HOLOTYPE [or PARATYPE, as applicable] *Laricobius wittmeri* sp. n. J. Háva det. 2009”.

Taxonomy

Laricobius loebli Jelínek et Háva, 2001

Material examined. “N India, Darjeeling, Tiger Hill, 2150 m, 7.v.1975, W. Wittmer lgt.” (1 male), J. Háva det. (Naturhistorisches Museum Basel, Switzerland).

Distribution. The species has hitherto been known only from Nepal. This specimen is a new record for India.

Laricobius wittmeri sp.nov.

(Figs 1–2)

Type material. Holotype (male) labelled: “O Nepal, Mumbug, O Makalu, 3500 m, 9.vi.1980, W. Wittmer lgt.” Paratype (1 female) labelled: “Nepal, Jumla-Padmara, 2300–2750 m, 27.v.1977, W. Wittmer lgt.” Holotype is deposited in Naturhistorisches Museum Basel, Switzerland, paratype in the author’s collection.

Description of holotype. Oblong ovate, transversely convex, honey-yellow and brown, ventral surface brown, antennae and legs honey-yellow. Pubescence of normal length, thin, light, semierect, inconspicuous.

Body measurements (mm): TL 2.67 PL 0.57 PW 0.62 EL 1.95 EW 1.25.

Male. Head somewhat transverse, eyes large, convex, finely faceted. Clypeus short, transversely convex, anteriorly truncate, finely and densely punctulate, not separated from frons by any transverse impression. Frons flatly convex with irregularly dispersed large and deep punctures of diameter nearly equal to the width of antennal flagellum and more widely separated transversely than longitudinally. Most of the large punctures are arranged in two irregular longitudinal rows each side of the frons; spaces between them finely punctulate, moderately lustrous, Antennae 11-segmented, light brown with yellowish setation.

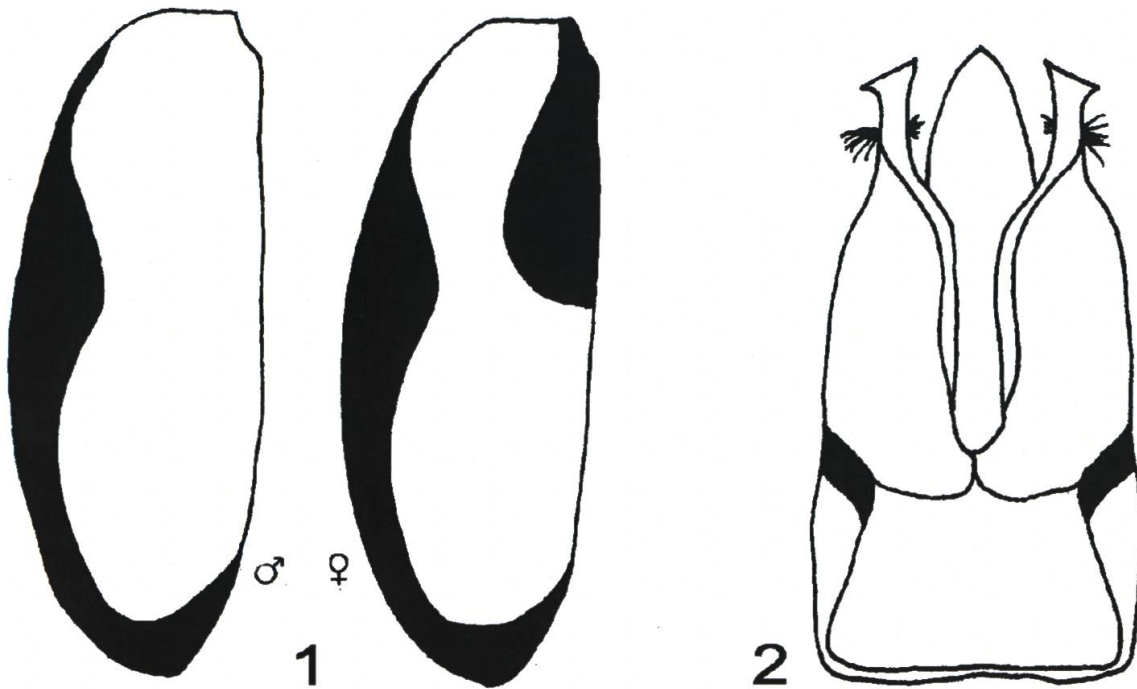
Pronotum subquadrate, transversely convex, punctate as frons, but some of the punctures larger, with diameter nearly equal to the width of the second antennomere, usually separated by less than one diameter. Spaces between punctures moderately lustrous, finely punctulate. Sides of pronotum in the median third arcuately outcurved, anterior angles acute, projecting laterally, posterior angles obtuse, indistinct. Scutellum small, semicircular. Elytra (Fig. 1) bicolorous, honey-yellow with dark-brown lateral parts, elongate-ovate, widest beyond their mid-length, simultaneously rounded at the apex. Base of elytra wider than pronotum, humeri rounded. Surface of elytra strongly transversely convex, transversely impressed at about a quarter of their length; lateral margins just visible simultaneously only in posterior half. Each elytron with scutellar striole and 10 complete striae. All striae canaliculate (incised), punctures nearly equal in size to those of frons, within one stria separated by nearly one diameter. The first three complete striae (counted from suture) more deeply incised with smaller and more widely spaced punctures in posterior half. Interstriae in anterior half nearly as wide as striae, moderately convex, sutural one somewhat swollen behind scutellar striole. Interstriae as well as impunctate humeral bulge moderately lustrous, finely and sparsely punctate.

Legs slender. Tarsal claws simple, honey-yellow. Tibiae and femora brown. Prosternum short, distinctly bordered anteriorly, prosternal process behind procoxae subtriangular, truncate apically. Mesosternum with broad, low, impunctate medio-longitudinal ridge bifurcate anteriorly, its posterior intercoxal process acute. Metasternum transversely convex, finely punctulate, lustrous, with sharp medio-longitudinal furrow all along its length and somewhat impressed alongside its posterior third. Metepisterna as well as abdominal sterna punctulate as metasternum, apex of hypopygium rounded. Elytral epipleura vanishing at the end of third abdominal sternum.

Aedeagus as shown in Fig. 2.

Female. External characters corresponding to the male, but elytra with large brown spot near suture.

Body measurements (mm): TL 2.35 PL 0.55 PW 0.65 EL 1.70 EW 1.22.



Figs 1–2. *Laricobius wittmeri* sp.nov.: 1 – elytra, dorso-lateral aspect (schematic, without punctures and setation); 2 – aedeagus.

Distribution. Nepal.

Etymology. Patronymics, dedicated in memoriam to Dr. Walter Wittmer (1915–1998), collector of the new species.

Differential diagnosis. The new species is visually similar to *L. bicolor* Háva, 2008 (China) but differing from it in elytral colour and form of antennae (elytra bicolorous – lateral parts black, other parts brown; antennal terminal segment more ovate in *L. bicolor*). It differs from the other Nepalese species in the characters mentioned in the following key.

- 1(2) Body unicolorous, black. ... *Laricobius loebli* Jelínek et Háva, 2001
- 2(1) Body bicolorous.
- 3(4) Elytra black with honey-yellow subtriangular apical area in posterior half. *Laricobius schawalleri* Háva et Jelínek, 2000
- 4(3) Elytra honey-yellow with dark-brown lateral parts and one large spot near suture (Figs 1–2). *Laricobius wittmeri* sp.nov.

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Author's address:

Jiří Háva
Private Entomological Laboratory and Collection
Rýznerova 37
CZ-252 62 Únětice u Prahy
CZECH REPUBLIC
e-mail: jh.dermestidae@volny.cz