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**The genus *Laena* Dejean, 1821 in Iran (Elburz Mountains),
with description of a new species
(Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae)**

by Wolfgang Schawaller¹⁾

Abstract. *Laena elburzica* sp.nov. from the Elburz Mountains in northern Iran is described and compared with *Laena glabriuscula* Sahlberg, 1908 from southern Turkey, Lebanon and Israel. It is the second species of this genus in Iran; previously, only *Laena hirtipes* Reitter, 1881 was known from this country. The latter species is also distributed in the Elburz Mountains (provinces Gilan, Mazandaran, Golestan) but also occurs in the adjacent Lenkoran and Talysh Mountains in Azerbaijan. In Iran, the genus is obviously restricted to the humid Hyrcanian mixed forest in the Elburz Mountains along the Caspian Sea and is absent in drier north-eastern Iran and adjacent Kopet Dag in Turkmenistan.

Keywords. Coleoptera – Tenebrionidae – *Laena* – Iran – new species – Hyrcanian forest

Introduction

To date, the genus *Laena* Dejean, 1821 (Tenebrionidae, subfamily Lagriinae Latreille, 1825, tribe Laenini Seidlitz, 1896) was known from Iran by only the single species *L. hirtipes* Reitter, 1881. This species is distributed in the Elburz Mountains in northern Iran along the Caspian Sea and also occurs in the adjacent and ecologically similar Lenkoran and Talysh Mountains in Azerbaijan (SCHUSTER 1916). Intensive siftings in the Elburz Mountains by Alexander Pütz (Eisenhüttenstadt) yielded a second species new to science that is described in the present paper. Subsequently, a few older specimens of this new taxon were also to be found in the collections of the Hungarian Natural History Museum in Budapest, already recognized as “unknown” by the late Dr. Kaszab (1915–1986) according to the labels.

The species of the genus *Laena* are soil-dwellers, mostly in arboreal habitats. Obviously enough, in Iran only the humid Hyrcanian forests in the Elburz Mountains along the Caspian Sea offer suitable biotopes. So it is not remarkable that in Iran, with its huge, arid deserts, semi-deserts and steppe ecoregions, more species do not occur. The genus is probably absent from drier north-eastern Iran and adjacent Kopet Dag in Turkmenistan. The bulk of its congeners live in the mountainous forests of China and the Himalayas (most recent papers SCHAWALLER 2008, 2009). The Caucasus hosts about 6–8 species (in need of taxonomic revision) and 11 species are known from the Tian Shan and Pamir in Central Asia (SCHAWALLER 1995).

¹⁾Contributions to Tenebrionidae no. 85. – For no. 84 see: *Ent. Rev. Japan* 64, 2010.

Depositories

CAPE	.....	Andreas Pütz collection, Eisenhüttenstadt
CRGT	.....	Dr. Roland Grimm collection, Tübingen
HNHM	.....	Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest
MHNG	.....	Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Genève
NHMB	.....	Naturhistorisches Museum, Basel
SMNS	.....	Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde, Stuttgart

Taxonomy

Laena elburzica sp.nov.

(Figs 1, 4–5)

Type material. Holotype ♂: Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Chalus County, 10 km SE Abbasabad, 282 m, 4.VI.2008, leg. A. Pütz, CAPE. – Paratypes: Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Chalus County, 10 km SE Abbasabad, 149–282 m, 4.VI.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 2 ex. CAPE, 1 ex. NHMB. Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Sari County, Mohammadabad, NE Sangdeh, 1533 m, 29.V.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 1 ex. CAPE. Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Sari County, Mohammadabad, E Qolqol, 916 m, 29.V.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 1 ex. CAPE, 1 ex. SMNS. Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Amol County, 10 km S Amol, 2039 m, 2.VI.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 1 ex. SMNS. Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Nowshar, 3.VIII.1974, leg. A. Senglet, 1 ex. HNHM. Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Chalus, 16.VII.1975, no collector labelled, 1 ex. SMNS. Iran, Prov. Gilan, Fuman County, Tales Mts., below Masuleh, 688 m, 8.VI.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 1 ex. SMNS. Iran, Prov. Gilan, Assalam, 80 km N Bandar Pahlavi, 18.V.1965, Mission Franco-Iranienne, 1 ex. HNHM. Iran, Prov. Gilan, Lunak, 600 m, 6.VII.1973, leg. A. Senglet, 1 ex. HNHM.

Description. Body length 5.5–7.0 mm. Eyes slightly prominent. Pronotum (Fig. 1) with small punctures 2–6 diameters apart, most punctures with longer erect setae; surface flat and lustrous; lateral margin distinctly bordered; propleura with sparser punctation and shorter setation than on disc. Elytra (Fig. 1) with rows of punctures without striae, punctures in rows similar to those on pronotum, most punctures with a short adpressed seta; intervals with an irregular row of small punctures each bearing an adpressed seta of the same length; ninth interval with 4 indistinct setiferous pores; all intervals flat and lustrous. All femora in both sexes without teeth or other armatures. Tibiae without sexual dimorphism. Aedeagus see Figs 4–5.

Distribution. Northern Iran (Mazandaran, Gilan prov.).

Etymology. Named after the Elburz Mountain Range in northern Iran, where this species was collected.

Differential diagnosis. *Laena elburzica* sp.nov. is quite similar to *Laena glabriuscula* Sahlberg, 1908 (Figs 2, 6–7) from southern Turkey, Lebanon and Israel and probably related to it. The new species may be recognized by its larger, more prominent eyes (small and not prominent in *L. glabriuscula*), by the shape of the pronotum widest shortly before the middle (widest near anterior corners in *L. glabriuscula*), and by the shape of the aedeagus, with its broad spade-like distale with a blunt tip (distale triangular with acute tip in *L. glabriuscula*). For separation from the other species from Iran (*L. hirtipes*), see below.

***Laena hirtipes* Reitter, 1881**

(Figs 3, 8–9)

Type material examined: Lenkoran, leg. Leder, holotype HNHM (sex not examined). – Same data, 7 paratypes HNHM.

New material: Azerbaijan, Talysh Mountains, Alexeevka, 15.IV.–8.V.1993, leg. S. Mukchanov, 1 ex. CAPE. – Azerbaijan, Astara Distr., Istisu W Astara, 100 m, 2.–6.VI.1996, leg. W. Schawaller, 2 ex. SMNS. – Azerbaijan, Lenkoran Distr., Apo below Bilasar, 350 m, 8.–9.VI.1996, leg. W. Schawaller, 2 ex. SMNS. – Azerbaijan, NW Baku, Altyagach, 1200 m, 21.–23.VI.1996, leg. W. Schawaller, 5 ex. SMNS. – Azerbaijan, Mystan, 11.–13.V.1992, 1 ex. SMNS. – Iran, Prov. Gilan, Assalam, 1300 m, 9.V.1970, leg. W. Wittmer, 1 ex. HNHM. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Naharkoran, Gorgan, 20.VII.1973, leg. A. Senglet, 1 ex. MHNG. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, S Tang-e-Rah, 28.VII.1974, leg. A. Senglet, 1 ex. MHNG. – Iran, Mazandaran, Galugah, Behshahr, 19.VII.1973, leg. A. Senglet, 1 ex. HNHM. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, road to Chorti (SW Chalkorud), 1150 m, 21.VI./3.VII.2003, leg. G. Sama, 1 ex. SMNS. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Sari Distr., Mohammadabad, E Qolqol, 916 m, 29.V.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 1 ex. CAPE. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Babol Distr., 2 km SW Firuz Jah, 839 m, 31.V.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 1 ex. CAPE. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Chalus Distr., 10 km SE Abbasabad, 149–282 m, 4.VI.2008, leg. A. Pütz, 2 ex. CAPE. – Iran, Prov. Mazandaran, Kolyak, 1630 m, 4.VI.2008, leg. D. Frenzel, 1 ex. CRGT. – Iran, Prov. Golestan, Reshteh-ye-Alborz Mts., 400 m, 12.V.2008, leg. M. Košťál, 1 ex. SMNS.

Redescription. Body length 5.0–7.0 mm. Eyes slightly prominent. Pronotum (Fig. 3) with distinct punctures, 2–5 diameters apart, most punctures with long, erect setae; surface flat and lustrous; lateral margin distinctly bordered; propleura with punctation and setation similar to that on disc. Elytra (Fig. 3) with rows of punctures without striae, punctures of rows larger than those on pronotum, most punctures with a longer and somewhat adpressed seta; intervals with an irregular row of distinct punctures each bearing a longer and erect seta; ninth interval with 4 indistinct setiferous pores; all intervals feebly convex and lustrous. All femora in both sexes with a pair of feeble angulations, more prominent in the posterior femora. Tibiae without sexual dimorphism. Aedeagus see Figs 8–9.

Distribution. Azerbaijan, Iran (Caspian provinces Gilan, Mazandaran, Golestan).

Separation of the two species from Iran

***Laena elburzica* sp.nov.** Elytra with short adpressed setation. Pronotum more flat, widest shortly before the middle. Punctures of elytral rows similar to pronotal punctures. All femora in both sexes without teeth or other armatures. Aedeagus Figs 4–5.

***Laena hirtipes* Reitter, 1881** Elytra with long, erect setation. Pronotum more convex, widest in anterior third. Punctures of elytral rows larger than pronotal punctures. All femora in both sexes with a pair of feeble angulations, more prominent in the posterior femora. Aedeagus Figs 8–9.

Acknowledgements

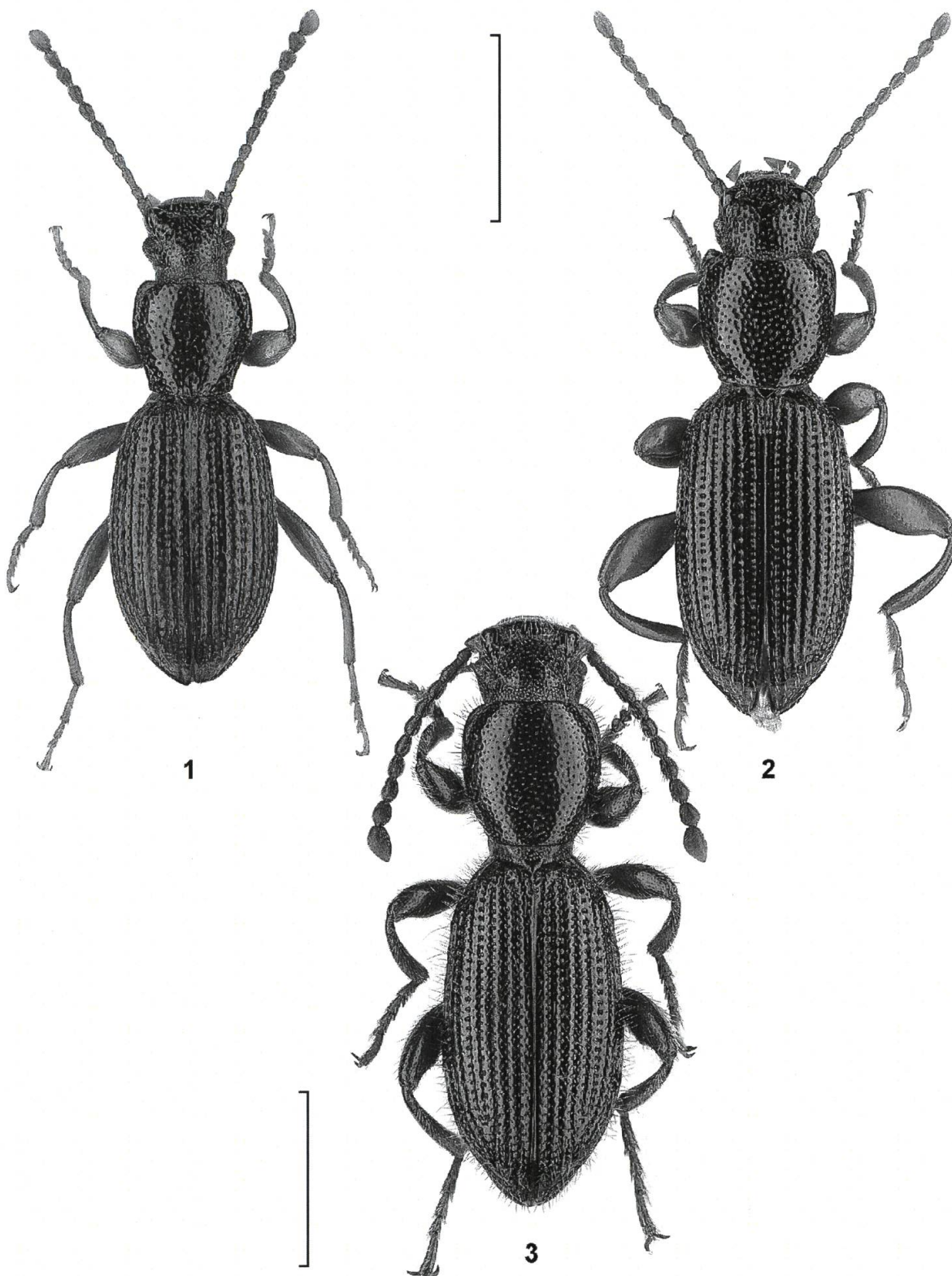
My thanks to Dr. Michael Košťál (Brno), Dr. Ivan Löbl (Genève), Dr. Ottó Merkl (Budapest) and Andreas Pütz (Eisenhüttenstadt), who made specimens available for study, either on loan from the collections under their care or as donations to the collection of the Natural History Museum Stuttgart. Johannes Reibnitz (Stuttgart) prepared the photographs using a Leica DFC 480 digital camera on a Leica MZ16 APO microscope. He subsequently processed the digital photographs using Leica LAS software.

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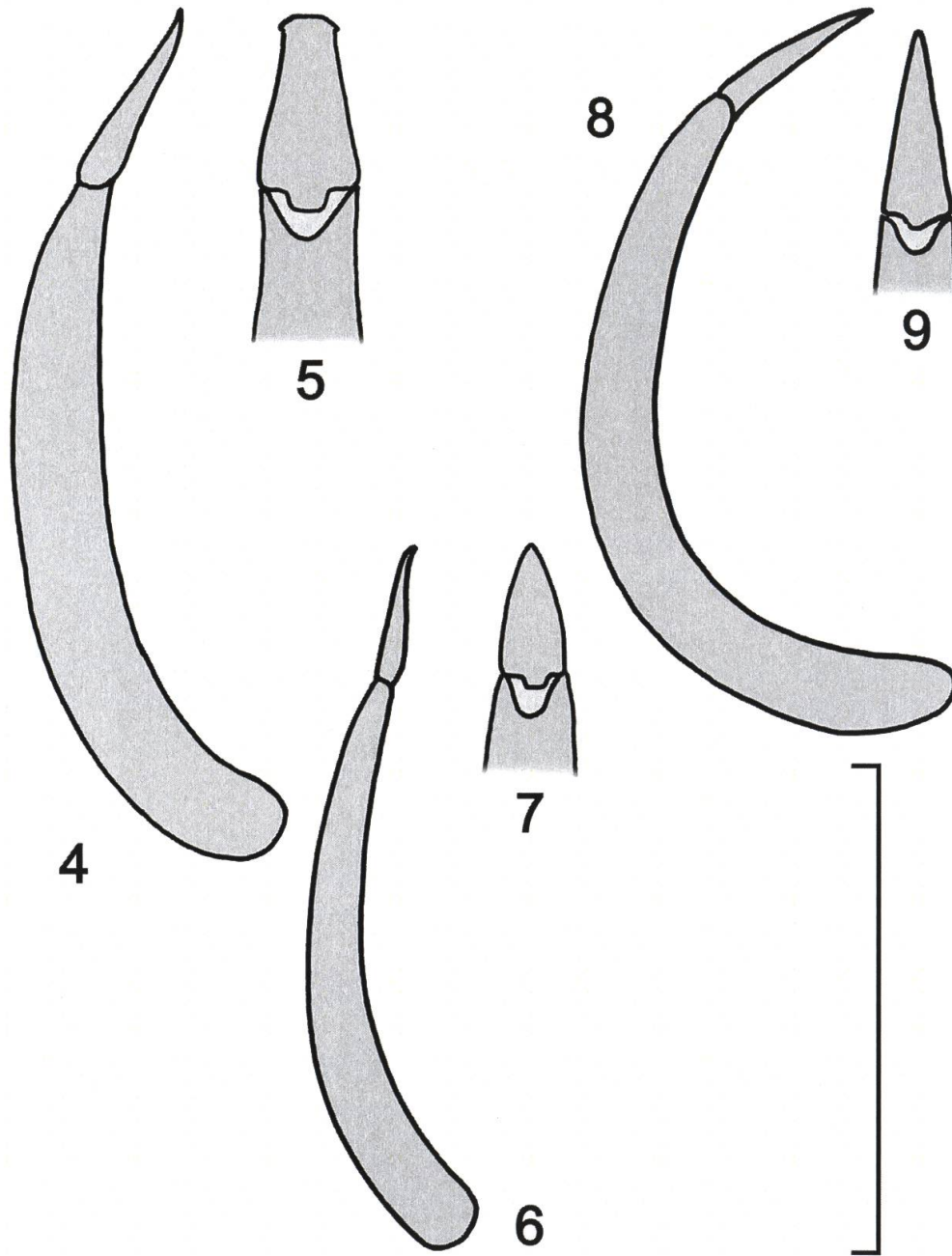
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Figs 1–3. Dorsal view of *Laena* species: 1, *L. elburzica* sp.nov., ♂ holotype, CAPE; 2, *L. glabriuscula*, ♂ non-type Israel, SMNS; 3, *L. hirtipes*, ♂ non-type Iran, SMNS. Scale line: 2.0 mm.



Figs 4–9. Aedeagus of *Laena* species: 4–5, *L. elburzica* sp.nov., ♂ paratype, SMNS; 6–7, *L. glabriuscula*, ♂ non-type Israel, SMNS; 8–9, *L. hirtipes*, ♂ non-type Iran, SMNS. Scale line: 1.0 mm.