

THREE NEW RECORDS OF ASSASSIN BUGS FROM ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS, INDIA

Paramita Mukherjee* and M. E. Hassan*

* Zoological Survey of India, 'M' Block, New Alipore, Kolkata-700053, INDIA. E-mails: paramitamukho@gmail.com; ehtashamulhassan@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT: The paper deals with three new records viz. *Scipinia horrida* (Stal), *Endochus nigricornis* Stal and *Biasticus flavus* (Distant) of the family Reduviidae from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. Key to the genera of subfamily Harpactorinae and distributions of each species in India and abroad have been included.

KEY WORDS: Reduviidae, new records, Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Assassin bugs are aggressive in nature and it enables them to predate and eat many insects. Many assassin bugs can inflict a painful bite, so they should be carefully handled. With more than 6878 described species and subspecies under 981 genera belonging to 25 subfamilies of the family Reduviidae recorded from the world are one of the largest and morphologically most diverse group of Heteroptera or true bugs. Of which, 465 species under 144 genera belonging to 14 subfamilies are recorded from India (Biswas & Mitra, 2011). Distant (1904, 1910) recorded a total of 9 species under 8 genera belonging to 4 subfamilies from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Later on, Chandra et al. (2013) added a total of 10 species under 8 genera belonging to 5 subfamilies from Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve, Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Prior to study a total of 19 species under 17 genera belonging to 8 subfamilies viz. Reduviinae, Triatominae, Ectrichdiinae, Harpactorinae, Peiratinae, Emesinae, Stenopodainae and Saicinae are so far recorded from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Present study is based on three new records viz. *Scipinia horrida* (Stal), *Endochus nigricornis* Stal and *Biasticus flavus* (Distant) belonging to subfamily Harpactorinae of the family Reduviidae from Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is based on the materials collected from Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the year 1964-1966. The specimens are deposited in the National Zoological Collection of Zoological Survey of India, Hemiptera Section, Kolkata. Measurement and photographs of the species were taken with the aid of Leica M 205A. All measurements are in millimetres.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION SYSTEMATIC LIST

Suborder **HETEROPTERA**

Infraorder **CIMICOMORPHA**

Family **REDUVIIDAE**

Subfamily **HARPACTORINAE**

Genus *Scipinia* Stal, 1861

Scipinia horrida (Stal, 1859)

Genus *Endochus* Burmeister, 1859

Endochus nigricornis Stal, 1859

Genus *Biasticus* Stal, 1866
Biasticus flavus (Distant, 1903)

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

Subfamily HARPACTORINAE

Key to the genera of the subfamily Harpactorinae

1. Specimen always spinous in body and legs.....*Scipinia* Stal
 -. Specimen not spinous.....2
 2. Head armed with a spine or tubercle behind the base of each antennae; lateral pronotal angles spinous.....*Endochus* Burmeister
 -. Head unarmed; lateral pronotal angles without any processes.....*Biasticus* Stal

Genus *Scipinia* Stal, 1861

1861. *Scipinia* Stal, Stett. Ent. Zeit., 22: 137 and 138.

Scipinia horrida (Stal, 1859) (Fig. 1)

1859. *Sinea horrida* Stal, III. Zool. Insekter., 16: 262.

1861. *Scipinia horrida*: Stal, Stett. Ent. Zeit., 22: 138.

1904. *Scipinia horrida* Stal, Distant, Fauna Brit. India, Rhynchota, 2: 384.

2006. *Scipinia horrida*, Ambrose, Zoos' Print. Journal, 21 (9): 12.

Material examined: 1 ex., INDIA: Andaman and Nicobar Islands: South Andaman: Bamboo flat road, 8.III.1964, coll. B.S. Lamba.

Diagnostic character: Body yellowish brown with black spots to the upper surface of head and connexivum with the largest on 4th and 5th segments; head above with three long spines on each side and with a number of small spines between or around them; anterior lobe of pronotum with four long and a number of smaller spines, posterior lobe of pronotum granulate, its lateral angle acute, upwardly directed; intermediate and posterior femora subnodulose near apices; abdomen dilated at 4th and 5th segments.

Length: 10 mm.

Distribution: India: Andaman and Nicobar Islands (South Andaman), Sikkim, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal. **Elsewhere:** China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka.

Genus *Endochus* Burmeister, 1859

1859. *Endochus* Stal, Ofv. K. Vet. Ak. Forh., 16: 194.

Endochus nigricornis Stal, 1859 (Fig. 2)

1859. *Endochus nigricornis* Stal, Ofv. K. Vet. Ak. Forh., 16: 194.

1904. *Endochus nigricornis*, Distant, Fauna Brit. India, Rhynchota, 2: 365-366.

2006. *Endochus nigricornis*, Ambrose, Zoos' Print. Journal, 21 (9): 8.

Material examined: 1 ex., INDIA: Andaman and Nicobar Islands: Great Nicobar, 17.IV.1966, coll. Daniel and Bhowmik.

Diagnostic character: Body yellowish brown; two central lines to posterior lobe of head (broken in middle), two central spots preceded by a small arcuated fascia to anterior pronotal lobe, disk of posterior lobe and lateral spines, disk of scutellum, corium (except base, base of clavus, lateral margins and veins), about seven lateral spots to sternum, sublateral spots to abdomen beneath, spots to coxae; under surface of intermediate and posterior femora and subapical annulation to all the femora black; head about as long as pronotum; first segment of antennae subequal to head, pronotum and scutellum together; anterior pronotal lobe impressed at base, posterior lobe with horizontal lateral spines directed upward; antennae dark brown annulated with yellowish markings; membrane brownish.

Length: 22-23 mm.

Distribution: India: Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Great Nicobar), Assam. **Elsewhere:** Indonesia, Myanmar.

Genus *Biasticus* Stal, 1866

1866. *Biasticus* Stal, Ofv. K. Vet. Ak. Forh., 23: 284 & 290.

Biasticus flavus (Distant, 1903) (Fig. 3)

1903. *Harpactor flavus* Distant, A.M.N.H., (7) 6: 206.

1904. *Harpactor flavus* Distant, Fauna Brit. India, Rhynchota, 2: 336-337.

2006. *Biasticus flavus* (Distant), Ambrose, Zoos' Print. Journal, 21 (9): 7.

Material examined: 3 exs., INDIA: Andaman and Nicobar Islands: South Andaman: Burmah Nallah, 17.IV.1964, coll. B.S. Lamba; 2 exs., South Andaman: Burmah Nallah, 15.IV.1964, coll. B.S. Lamba; 1 ex., South Andaman: Burmah Nallah, 12.IV.1964, coll. B.S. Lamba; 1 ex., South Andaman: BurmahNallah, 13.IV.1964, coll. B.S. Lamba.

Diagnostic character: Body beneath and posterior lobe of pronotum brownish yellow; head above, lateral fascia on each side of head behind eyes, antennae, rostrum, anterior lobe of pronotum, anterior area of prosternum, disk of meso and metasterna, coxae and legs black; abdomen with black lateral, segmental, transverse fasciae; scutellum black with apex luteous; corium brownish yellow; membrane bronzy brown; connexivum brownish spotted with black; rostrum with first segment longer than antecular portion of head; postocular portion longer than antecular; head about as long as pronotum; first segment of antennae shorter than anterior femora; posterior pronotal lobe twice as long as anterior pronotal lobe.

Length: 10-11 mm.

Distribution: India: Andaman and Nicobar Islands (South Andaman), Assam.

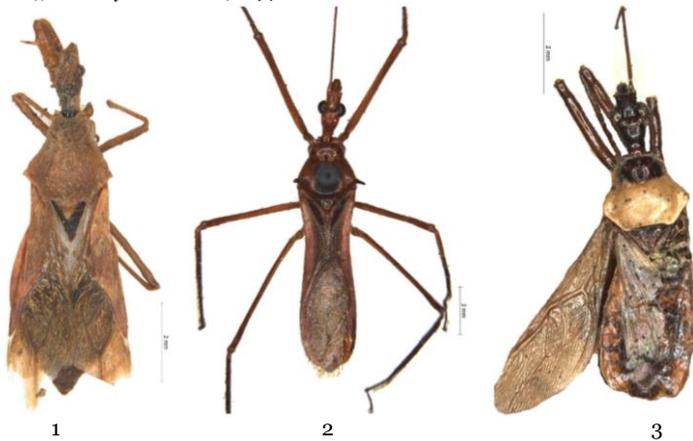
Elsewhere: China, Hong-kong, Japan, Myanmar.

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Figures 1-3. 1. *Scipinia horrida* (Stal), 2. *Endochus nigricornis* Stal, 3. *Biasticus flavus* (Distant).