



A new species of *Himacerus* from South Africa (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Nabidae)

IZYASLAV M. KERZHNER¹ & DAWID H. JACOBS^{2,*}

¹Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, Universitetskaya nab. 1, St. Petersburg 199034, Russia.
E-mail: kim@ik3599.spb.edu

²Department of Zoology and Entomology, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 0002, Republic of South Africa.
E-mail: dhjacobs@zoology.up.ac.za

*Author for correspondence

Abstract

Himacerus frater sp. nov. is described from the western part of the Republic of South Africa. It is closely related to *H. hottentotta* (Reuter). A key to the Afrotropical species of *Himacerus* is given.

Key words: Heteroptera, Nabidae, *Himacerus*, South Africa, new species, key

Introduction

The Nabidae with the somewhat inappropriate common name of Damsel bugs is a cosmopolitan family of medium-sized (4–12 mm.) predaceous bugs. The Nabidae are divided into four subfamilies, the Nabinae, Prostemmatinae, Medocostinae, and the Velocipedinae (although the last two are often regarded as separate families). Only the Nabinae and Prostemmatinae occur in South Africa. The Nabinae are usually more slender bugs that usually have a drab coloration whereas the Prostemmatinae normally have a more stout body form and often possess distinctive red, yellow, black, and white colour patterns. The Nabinae are usually encountered low in dense vegetation where they are general predators of small arthropods; in contrast, the Prostemmatinae are usually found on the ground under rocks or in leaf litter, where they appear to prey exclusively on other Heteroptera.

Himacerus belongs to the Nabinae. It is distributed in the Palearctic, Oriental, and Afrotropical Regions; there are four described species in the last region (Kerzhner 1989). In the present paper a fifth species, *H. frater*, closely related to *H. hottentotta* Reuter, is described and figured.

Material and Methods

As described by Jacobs (1986, 1990, 1996), with the following modifications: Specimens prepared for SEM examination were investigated with the aid of a JEOL JSM–840 SEM using an acceleration voltage of 5kV. Colour photographs were taken with the aid of a Nikon SMZ800 stereomicroscope using a Zeiss Axiocam MRc5 digital camera. Several photographs of a subject were taken at different focus levels before they were stacked with the aid of the Combine-Z software program.

The material examined is in the following collections: D.H. Jacobs collection, Pretoria, South Africa (DHJS); National Collection of Insects, Pretoria, South Africa (SANC); Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, South Africa (TMSA); and Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russia (ZIN).