



Biting midges of the genus *Leehelea* Debenham (Diptera: Ceratopogonidae) in India

MOU NANDI, ABHIJIT MAZUMDAR & PRASANTA K. CHAUDHURI¹

Department of Zoology, University of Burdwan, Burdwan 713 104, India.

¹ Corresponding author. E-mail: pkchaudhuri.bu@gmail.com

Abstract

The genus *Leehelea* Debenham is newly recorded in India by four new species, *Leehelea brevidensis*, *L. fuscilateralis*, *L. magnidentata* and *L. parvicapsula*. Before this investigation, only 5 species were known worldwide and with these additions, the number of world species is raised to 9. A new key to females of all the species is presented here.

Key words: Oriental predaceous midges, Identification key, new species, India

Introduction

Leehelea was described as a genus by Debenham (1974) of the tribe Sphaeromiini Newman (1834) based on the type, *Homohoelea hollandiensis* Tokunaga (1966) from Indonesia. The genus is closely related to *Sphaeromyias* Curtis (1829) but is different on account of its dense pubescent scutum with a small anterior tubercle; costa extending nearly to wing tip, second anal vein bifurcated, presence of both radial cells, sessile median fork; ventral surface of femur with stout setae, hind tibia with row of elongated posterior setae arising from large micro tubercles, claws long, equal to or longer than tarsomere V, with numerous batonnets, abdomen petiolate with tuft of ventral setae on segment VIII and two functional and one rudimentary spermathecae. Previously, this genus was known from only 5 species (3 Australia, 1 Indonesia, 1 Malaysia) (Borkent, 2012).

Material and methods

Midges collected in incandescent light traps were mounted on microslides following Bose et al. (2003) with diagrams drawn in camera Lucida at appropriate magnifications. Terms for structures follow those used by Spinelli et al. (2009). Wing vein nomenclature follows the system with modifications as proposed by Szadziewski (1996) and Bose et al. (2003).

All measurements were done using ocular grid and are expressed in millimeters (mm) with ranges suffixed by “n” within parentheses indicating the number of specimens encountered. Holotypes and paratypes presently retained in the Entomology Laboratory, University of Burdwan, will be deposited to the National Zoological Collections (NZC), Calcutta.

Leehelea brevidensis sp.n.

(Fig. 1A–J)

Type material. Holotype ♀, India, West Bengal, Saktigarh, 23°21'N, 87°97'E, 11 August 1967, Coll. P.K. Chaudhuri. Paratypes: 2 ♀, India, West Bengal, Burdwan 23°14'N, 87°39'E, 12 July 2002, Coll. S. Nandi.

Etymology. The name comes from the Latin words *brev*, meaning *short*, in reference to the small proximal teeth of the mandible.