



Synonymic notes on Palaearctic and Oriental *Scydmaenus* (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Scydmaeninae)

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The last two years brought surprising descriptions and nomenclatural changes in the tribe Scydmaenini of the ant-like stone beetles. Makhan & Ezzatpanah (2011) established a new genus *Roepnarainius*, clearly based on a misinterpretation of morphological characters. Another curious taxonomic decision was the placement by Tronquet (2012) of *Scydmaenus perrisi* Reitter, 1882 as a junior synonym of *S. hellwigii* (Herbst, 1792). Illustrations in that article suggest that the material studied by Tronquet was misidentified, and a superficial similarity of aedeagi in two other common European species of *Scydmaenus* led to erroneous conclusions. These two cases are commented on and verified in the present paper.

Scydmaenus Latreille

Scydmaenus Latreille, 1802: 116. Type species: *Pselaphus hellwigii* of Paykull, 1800, not Herbst, 1792 (= *Scydmaenus tarsatus* Müller & Kunze, 1822) (monotypy). Note: the type species selection was commented on by Newton & Franz, 1998.

Roepnarainius Makhan & Ezzatpanah, 2011: 1, **syn. nov.** Type species: *Roepnarainius jacquelineae* Makhan & Ezzatpanah, 2011 (original designation).

Remarks. Makhan & Ezzatpanah (2012) did not provide a diagnosis for *Roepnarainius* and the three-line long description contains nearly exclusively characters found in a majority of Scydmaeninae (and many other beetles). The only taxonomically useful information is that their new genus is most similar to *Scydmaenus*, but differs in the presence of parameres, absent in *Scydmaenus*. The Fig. 1 presented in their article shows a specimen easily identifiable as *Scydmaenus*, with an impression on the posterior part of the vertex, typical of many representatives of the subgenus *Cholerus* Thomson, 1859. Also Figs. 2–5 show an aedeagus typical for *Scydmaenus*. This aedeagus, presented in lateral and approximately ventral aspects (with an additional close-up of its apical region) does not possess any structures that can be interpreted as parameres. Figure 3 shows a large subapical dorsal projection reaching the apex of median lobe. Such a projection can be found in a number of species of *Scydmaenus*, including Oriental representatives of this large and diverse genus, e.g. *S. uncinatus* Schaufuss from Malaysia, Indonesia and New Guinea (Franz 1970; Fig. 9) or *S. foveiceps* Franz from Indonesia (Franz 1984; Fig. 11). These species have also a similar general shape of the aedeagus as that illustrated by Makhan & Ezzatpanah. The Figure 4 in the original description of *Roepnarainius* shows the aedeagus in a ventral view, with remnants of the terminal abdominal segments, which might have been misinterpreted by the authors as parameres. Certainly this aedeagus is not much different from any copulatory organs known in *Scydmaenus* s. str. or in some species belonging to the subgenus *Cholerus*. Moreover, a group of sensilla located in the sub-apical part of the median lobe and misinterpreted by Makhan & Ezzatpanah as "teeth" is a typical character found in many species of *Scydmaenus*. *Roepnarainius* is here placed as a junior synonym of *Scydmaenus*, which results in *Scydmaenus jacquelineae* (Makhan & Ezzatpanah), **comb. nov.**

Scydmaenus jacquelineae shows characters typical for several Oriental species included in the subgenus *Cholerus* (e.g., Franz 1984), i.e., an impressed vertex and a general shape of the aedeagus. However, the type species of *Cholerus*, *S. hellwigii* and its European congeners have strikingly different aedeagi, which are divided by a narrow constriction into an elongate proximal and a short distal part. A similarly shaped aedeagus can be found in species of *Scydmaenus* belonging to the subgenus *Mascarensia* Franz, 1973 (e.g., Franz 1984; Figs. 28, 29). Diagnoses and relationships of these subgenera remain unclear and for this reason *Scydmaenus jacquelineae* is treated as *incertae sedis* within *Scydmaenus*.