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Two new combinations and a key to the species of the genus *Earota* Mulsant & Rey (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Aleocharinae)

SEUNG-GYU LEE[1] & KEE-JEONG AHN[2,3]
Department of Biology, Chungnam National University, Daejeon 305-764, Republic of Korea.
E–mail: [1]jspdi@naver.com; [2]kjahn@cnu.ac.kr
[3]Corresponding author

Abstract

Earota babai (Sawada, 1989), **comb. nov.** and *Earota koreana* (Paśnik, 2001), **comb. nov.** are transferred from the genera *Pelioptera* Kraatz, 1857 and *Aloconota* Thomson, 1858, respectively. *Earota babai* is recorded from the Korean Peninsula for the first time and *E. koreana* is a new addition to South Korea. Redescriptions, habitus photographs, illustrations of diagnostic characters of these two species and a key to the known species of the genus *Earota* Mulsant & Rey, 1874 are provided to facilitate identification.

Key words: Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Aleocharinae, Geostibini, *Earota*, new combination, Korea

Introduction

The aleocharine genus *Earota* was described by Mulsant and Rey (1874) based on *Homalota reyi* Kiesenwetter, 1850 and contains only two species with an interesting disjunct distribution in the Nearctic and West Palearctic regions (Gusarov 2002). The genus is characterized by combination of the following characters: robust and large body; complete infraorbital carina; antennomere 11 distinctly longer than the preceding two combined or as long as the preceding three combined; reduced α-sensillum of labrum (α; see Ashe 1984); ligula broad, divided into two lobes at base; pronotum more or less flat, pubescence on midline directed posteriorly; moderately separated mesocoxae; apically rounded mesoventral process; medial macroseta of mesotibia inconspicuous, shorter than tibial width; metatarsomere 1 as long as or slightly longer than 2; one empodial seta present, not longer than claws; medial lamellae of median lobe of aedeagus large and broad (Gusarov 2002; pers. obs.).

While studying Korean Athetini and related taxa, we discovered *Pelioptera babai* Sawada, 1989 and *Aloconota koreana* Paśnik, 2001 for the first time in the Korean Peninsula and in South Korea, respectively. After detailed examination of those two species and comparison with *E. reyi* (type species of *Earota*), we found that they are in agreement with the diagnostic characters of *Earota* presented by Gusarov (2002). In this paper we transfer these two species to the genus *Earota*, redescribe *E. babai* and *E. koreana*, and provide a key to the known species of the genus *Earota*.

Material and methods

Specimens of the type species of the genus, *Earota reyi*, were borrowed from the Field Museum of Natural History (FMNH), Chicago, USA, and the type specimens of *Aloconota koreana* (the holotype and two paratypes) were borrowed from the Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals (ISEA), Kraków, Poland. All other specimens examined are deposited in the Chungnam National University Insect Collection (CNUIC), Daejeon, Korea.

Habitus photographs were taken using an image processing system (Olympus SZX 16 stereoscopic

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Jinbu-myeon, Mt. Odaesan, Sangwonsa, 18 V 2002, SJ Park, CW Shin, sifting; ♂, same data as former except for '18 VI–22VII 2004, SJ Park, KM Yang, DH Lee, FIT'; ♀, Pyeongchang-gun, Mt. Odaesan, 25 V 2004, SJ Park, JS Park, sifting; ♀, same data as former except for 'Jeongmyeolbogung, 7–9 VII 1998; KL You, HJ Lim, FIT'.

Distribution. Korea.

Remarks. This species is transferred from *Aloconota* Thomson, 1858 to *Earota* based on Gusarov's diagnosis of the latter genus (2002). It corresponds to *Earota* and differs from *Aloconota* in the following characters: large and broad body (small and narrow body in *Aloconota*); antennomere 11 distinctly longer than preceding two combined (antennomere 11 about as long as preceding two combined in *Aloconota*); infraorbital carina complete (infraorbital carina incomplete in *Aloconota*); mesocoxae moderately separated (mesocoxae narrowly separated in *Aloconota*); mesoventral process slightly pointed at apex (mesoventral process distinctly pointed at apex in *Aloconota*); metatarsomere 1 about as long as 2 (metatarsomere 1 longer than 2 in *Aloconota*); empodial seta shorter than claw (empodial seta longer than claw in *Aloconota*).

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