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Studies of Madagascan Ptiliidae (Coleoptera) 2: The genus *Ptenidium* including three new species

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Abstract

This is the second report detailing Ptiliidae collected from forest leaf litter by the Moravian Museum expeditions to Madagascar 2010–2012. 3 new species are described and figured: *Ptenidium azafady* sp. n., *P. lambdai* sp. n., and *P. tanalai* sp.n., and the criteria for assessing subgeneric status discussed.

Key words: taxonomy, Ptiliidae, *Ptenidium*, new species, Madagascar

Introduction

This is the second report detailing the Ptiliidae collected in Madagascar by Dr Petr Baňá of the Moravian Museum (Brno, Czech Republic) and his students Ricca Raveloson and Lalao Sahondra Rahanitriniaina. The work, which is ongoing, was started as part of the long-term research project ‘Étude à long terme de la biodiversité des groupes choisis d’insectes (Coléoptères, Héteroïptères, Lepidoptères et Homoptères) dans les localités préalablement sélectionnées en considération de la recherche et la protection de la biodiversité dans les aires protégées de Madagascar’ in co-operation with the Department of Entomology of the University of Antananarivo, initiated by Miloš Trýzna (Czech Republic) in 2007. All the Ptiliidae collected have since been passed to the Natural History Museum (BMNH) in London. At the time of the first report collecting had focussed on the Andasibe -Mantadia, Ankarafantsika, Montagne d’Ambre and Ranomafana National Parks, and the Ambohitantely Special Reserve, but since then work has also been carried out in the Isalo National Park (Analalava Forest) on the south-west of the Island.

Details of sites, materials, methods, and terminology are given in the first report (Darby, 2013b). The research for this paper differs only in that a more accurate method of making the measurements with a ScopePhoto 3 microscope camera was used.

Rationale and discussion of sub generic characters

Ptenidium is a well defined genus of distinctive beetles distributed throughout the world although most species have been described from the northern hemisphere with the concentration being in the Palaearctic region. Until the research of Johnson in the 1970s the only records from the tropics were of *P. macrocephalum* from Sri Lanka, described by Nietner in 1856, and *P. reticulatum* from the Seychelles described by Britten in 1926. The latter, subsequently established by Johnson as belonging to a separate as yet undescribed genus, was the only species of *Ptenidium* mentioned in the report on the Ptiliidae collected by the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition to the Indian Ocean in 1905 (Britten, 1926). Johnson described new species from Nigeria and the Indian mainland, the Seychelles, Ceylon and the only recorded species from Madagascar: *cognatum* and *planum* from the Baie d’Antongil, Fampanambo, and *improvisum* and *vadoni* from Andranofotsy, all collected by J. Vadon 1938-1958 (Johnson 1970).

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