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Nomenclatural changes, new country records and range extensions of Baridinae (Coleoptera, Curculionidae) from China

JENS PRENA¹, JIANI YANG², LI REN¹, ZHILIANG WANG¹, NING LIU¹ & RUNZHI ZHANG^{1,3}

¹Key Laboratory of Zoological Systematics and Evolution, Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100101, P. R. China

²School of Forestry, Beijing Forestry University, Beijing 100083, P. R. China

³Corresponding author. E-mail: zhangrz@ioz.ac.cn

Abstract

Thirteen relatively frequently collected species of baridine weevils from mainland China were mapped to improve our understanding of biogeographic patterns and distributional ranges of Baridinae in the Palaearctic and Oriental regions. This simple case study showed that taxonomists tend to underestimate the spatial scope required in regional investigations and descriptive works often resulting in widespread species being described numerous times. Several apparently uncommon species with uncertain relationships, known previously only from moderately high latitudes in the Palaearctic region, showed Oriental affinities. In each region, species may occur over many thousands of kilometers not only in East-West but also in North-South directions. New synonyms are *Mimophilus* Faust (= *Baridiomorphus* Voss), *Acythopeus inflatirostris* Voss (= *Acythopeus proximus* Voss), *Baris albisquama* Zaslavskij (= *Baris ljaodunensis* Zaslavskij), *Mimophilus tragicus* Faust (= *Baridiomorphus conicollis* Voss), *Moreobaris deplanata* (Roelofs) (= *Acythopeus patruelis* Voss), *Baris pilosa* Roelofs (= *Baris blennus* Marshall, = *Baris piliventris* Zaslavskij, = *Baris pygidialis* Voss, = *Baris suvorovi* Reitter), *Baris artemisiae* (Panzer) (= *Baris corvina* Voss), *Pellobaris melancholica* (Roelofs) (= *Paracythopeus collaris* Voss), *Pteridobaris maritima* (Roelofs) (= *Baris quinquecarinata* Zaslavskij) and *Ulobaris kuchenbeisseri* Hartmann (= *Baris pseudospitzyi* Zaslavskij, = *Baris ussuriensis ussuriensis* Zaslavskij, = *Baris ussuriensis chinganensis* Zaslavskij). New combinations are *Athesapeuta gracilis* (Voss) (from *Eumycterus* Schönherr), *Athesapeuta inornata* (Voss) (from *Baris* Germar) and *Nespilobaris inflatirostris* (Voss) (from *Acythopeus* Pascoe). *Baridius vestitus* Perris (not Boheman) and *Baris pygidialis* Hustache (not Voss) are newly recognized primary homonyms. A lectotype is designated for *Moreobaris deplanata*. Twenty-four species are recorded newly from China.

Key words: weevils, distribution, life history, Palaearctic, Oriental

Introduction

The currently available information on Chinese baridine weevils is scarce and fraught with problems. The French missionary J. P. A. David (1826–1900) apparently was the first to collect specimens in remote parts of China during the 1860s and 70s. A few others were collected somewhat later in exploratory expeditions under N. M. Prževalskij, G. N. Potanin and B. Széchenyi. This and other material from more accessible regions was described by European coleopterists but generally remained poorly known. Baridines from China did not enter the scientific literature before Deyrolle & Fairmaire (1878).

In the 20th Century, E. Voss was the most prolific student of the group in the region and described a total of 28 species (Voss 1932, 1934, 1937, 1939, 1941, 1953, 1956, 1958). Numerous of his specimens were collected in the Wuyi Mountains (Fujian Province) in 1937/38 by J. Klapperich and 1946 by Tschung Sen, while those of his early papers came from various European collections, such as Deutsches Entomologisches Institut, Senckenberg Museum Frankfurt and the G. Frey Collection. Voss rarely provided meaningful comparisons with already described species so the identities of his species often remained unknown. Moreover, the type material retained by him and Klapperich is difficult to find or has been destroyed. Voss lost his first collection by bombing in April 1945

patterns attained an unfortunate popularity with taxonomists in the early 20th Century. Researchers now have the methodology and opportunity to substantiate or rebut the formal distinction of regional taxa. However, basic knowledge of distributional ranges and occurrences are needed before such studies can be planned and conducted successfully. Our results underline that the taxonomic problems inherent to the diverse but understudied groups of organisms are transregional and cannot be solved locally. Even though significant amounts of work and funding went into taxonomic and phylogenetic research in recent time, declining and inadequately staffed museum facilities take their toll and annihilate much of the gained momentum.

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