



***Ptiliola flammifera* (Młynarski) reinstated as a species distinct from *P. kunzei* (Heer) (Coleoptera: Ptiliidae)**

OSCAR VORST

National Museum of Natural History, Naturalis, PO Box 9517, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands. E-mail: vorst@naturalis.nl

Abstract

Ptiliola flammifera (Młynarski) is recognised as a species distinct from *P. kunzei* (Heer). Apart from differences in the structure of the aedeagus, both species can be separated by the pronotal surface and the apical fringe of the elytra. The male of *P. flammifera* carries a distinct tuft of hairs on the metaventrite, absent in *P. kunzei*. Currently, *P. flammifera* is only known from Poland and the Netherlands. A key for the identification of all three Palaearctic *Ptiliola* species is presented. A lectotype is designated for *Trichopteryx kunzei* Heer, 1841.

Key words: Ptiliidae, featherwing beetle, *Ptiliola*, Palaearctic region, identification key, lectotype designation

Introduction

The ptiliid genus *Ptiliola* Haldeman, 1848, includes minute beetles measuring about 0.6 mm. For a long time it was named *Nanoptilium* Flach, 1889, and treated as a subgenus of *Ptiliolium* Flach, 1888. Generic rank was attributed by Besuchet (1971), based on elytral structure, spermathecal morphology and the pygidium, which in *Ptiliola* is ornated with a single spine only. *Ptiliola* was erected by Haldeman (1848) for the four species of Gillmeister's "IV. Gruppe" [= fourth group] of *Trichopteryx*, the only ptiliid genus then recognized (Gillmeister 1845). Amongst them is *Trichopteryx nana* Stephens, 1830 (listed as a *nomen oblitum* by Johnson (2004) and generally considered a senior synonym of *Trichopteryx kunzei* Heer, 1841), that was designated as the type species of the genus *Ptiliola* by Motschulsky (1869). Biström and Silfverberg (1979) argued that *Ptiliola* was the valid name of the genus, and that it had to replace the junior synonym *Nanoptilium*, which by original monotypy has *Trichopteryx kunzei* Heer as type species.

In the Palaearctic region two valid species are currently recognised (Johnson 2004): *Ptiliola kunzei* (Heer, 1841) and *P. brevicollis* (Matthews, 1860). Both species have also been reported from North America (Johnson 1990; Sörensson 2003). The first one is considered a true Holarctic element, while *P. brevicollis* is of uncertain origin (Sörensson 2003).

Nanoptilium flammiferum* and *N. aequisetum

Młynarski (1985) described two new species in his treatment of the Polish species of *Ptiliola* (then *Nanoptilium*). He recognized *P. flammifera* (Młynarski, 1985) and *P. aequiseta* (Młynarski, 1985) in addition to *P. kunzei* and *P. brevicollis*. Judging from the original descriptions and especially the pronotal shapes figured, both species should be very close to *P. kunzei*. The species were separated from *P. kunzei* by the type of male metasternal pubescence, subtle differences in pronotal shape and characteristics of the apical fringe of the