



On the identity of *Chunra gigantea* Distant (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae), the largest member of the arboreal leafhopper subfamily Idiocerinae

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Abstract

Kuchingella Wei & Webb, **gen. n.** is established in the leafhopper tribe Megipocerini of the subfamily Idiocerinae, with *Chunra gigantea* Distant as its type species, based on the description of the male of this species for the first time. The similarity of the new genus to the related genus, *Megipocerus* Zachvatkin, is discussed. The rostrum of both genera is sexually dimorphic.

Key words: Homoptera, Auchenorrhyncha, Megipocerini, new genus, morphology, sexual dimorphism, Malaysia

Introduction

With overall measurements of between 9.8–11.2 mm, the striking leafhopper, *Chunra gigantea* Distant, 1908, from Sarawak, is by far the largest known member of the arboreal cicadellid subfamily Idiocerinae. The species was originally described from an unknown number of female specimens from Malaysia, of which two female syntypes are deposited in the Natural History Museum, London (BMNH), together with a recently discovered male also from Malaysia (Sarawak). The inappropriate generic placement of *C. gigantea* was alluded to by Zachvatkin (1945) who, when describing *Megipocerus*, compared the genus to the “genuine” *Chunra*, i.e., its type species: *C. puncticosta* (Walker).

In the present paper the identity of *Chunra gigantea* is reviewed and the species is placed in a new genus based on the description of the male for the first time. The new genus resembles *Megipocerus* Zachvatkin. Isaev (1988) erected the idiocerine tribe Megipocerini for the genus *Megipocerus* and 15 other genera from the Old and New World. However, most characters distinguishing Megipocerini used by Isaev (1988) are found to be variable or uncertain. The validity and definition of this tribe are being treated elsewhere (Webb *et al.*, in prep.). Both the new genus and *Megipocerus* are found to have a sexually dimorphic rostrum (see Discussion) and a feature not noticed in other leafhoppers is the modifications to the male eighth abdominal segment (see description).

Material and methods

External morphology was observed and illustrated under a Motic SMZ 168-BL Microscope and a Leitz Laborlux 12 Microscope. The male and female terminalia were dissected out, treated with 10% KOH solution at approximately 80°C for several minutes, rinsed with water, immersed in glycerol and illustrated using a compound light microscope (Nikon Eclipse 50i).

The terminology of setal rows on legs follows Rakitov (1997).

Material examined is deposited in the Natural History Museum, London, UK (BMNH).