



A remarkable new genus of Dikraneurini (Hemiptera: Cicadomorpha: Cicadellidae: Typhlocybinae) from Southeast Asia

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Abstract

Sweta **gen. n.** is described and illustrated based on type species *S. hallucinata* **sp. n.** from northeast India and Thailand and placed in the typhlocybinae tribe Dikraneurini. The new genus is unique among known Typhlocybinae in having the pronotum enlarged and extended to the scutellar suture. This feature is characteristic of the related subfamily Signoretinae, but among other subfamilies is restricted to a few brachypterous forms.

Key words: Homoptera, leafhopper, morphology, distribution

Introduction

Microleafhoppers of the tribe Dikraneurini are small, delicate, often colorful insects that occur in a wide variety of habitats ranging from lowland tropical rainforest to cool temperate grassland. Morphologically, dikraneurines differ from other members of subfamily Typhlocybinae in having the hind wing submarginal vein complete and veins RP and MA confluent distally. The type genus, *Dikraneura* Hardy, is widespread in the Holarctic region and associated mostly with grasslands where species are recorded from a wide variety of grasses and herbaceous dicots (Knight 1968). From an ecological perspective, *Dikraneura* appears to be atypical of Dikraneurini as a whole because most other described dikraneurines occur in forests and apparently feed on woody hosts. Although relatively few species have been described from the tropics, the rainforest canopy of lowland Amazonia apparently harbors a large and almost completely undescribed fauna (Dietrich and Wallner 2002). More dikraneurine species have been described from the Old World tropics, but the fauna there also remains poorly known.

The new dikraneurine genus described herein from northeast India and Thailand is remarkable because it shares features with another leafhopper subfamily, Signoretinae, restricted to the Old World tropics (see Discussion). This new genus, based on a single new species, is described below.

Material and methods

Morphological terminology follows Dietrich (2005). Specimens examined are deposited in the Natural History Museum, London (BMNH), Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, Illinois, USA (INHS), and Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden, Chiang Mai, Thailand (QSBG).

Typhlocybinae: Dikraneurini

Sweta **gen. n.**

Type species: *Sweta hallucinata* **sp. n.**