



Seven new species of the leafhopper genus *Tambocerus* (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae) from the Indian subcontinent

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Abstract

Seven new species of the genus *Tambocerus* Zhang & Webb, *Tambocerus acutus* sp. nov., *T. cholas* sp. nov. (both from India: Tamil Nadu), *T. daii* sp. nov. (India: Kerala), *T. furcostylus* sp. nov. (India: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu), *T. krameri* sp. nov. (India, Karnataka; Sri Lanka), *T. nilgiris* sp. nov. (India: Tamil Nadu) and *T. zahniseri* sp. nov. (India: Karnataka) are described and illustrated. *T. viraktamathi* Rao is redescribed and illustrated. A key to species of *Tambocerus* from the Indian subcontinent is also given.

Key words. Auchenorrhyncha, new species, morphology, Deltocephalinae, Selenocephalini

Introduction

In a study of Asian and Pacific selenocephaline leafhoppers, Zhang & Webb (1996) established the genus *Tambocerus* with *Selenocephalus disperatus* Melichar from Sri Lanka as the type species. They also stated that the type series of *S. disperatus* “represents five different species, four of the present genus [*Tambocerus*] and one of *Carvaka* Distant”. They stabilized the species name by designating a lectotype from Pattipola, Sri Lanka. They also stated the following: “The specimens examined and figures by Distant (1908) as *Phlepsius divaricatus* Melichar (BMNH) belong to *disperatus* and new species of this genus [*Tambocerus*]. The specimens examined and figured of *Carvaka thoracica* Distant by Pruthi (1934: 81) almost certainly belong to this genus. The specimen examined and figured by Datta (1973: 442 and 1988: 224) as *disperatus* is a new species of this genus.”

Zhang & Webb (1996) however, did not name and describe the new species they found from Sri Lanka and recognized only *Tambocerus disperatus* (Melichar) and *T. plumbeus* (Distant). Subsequently, Rao (1996) described the third species of the genus *T. viraktamathi* Rao from Tamil Nadu and Shen *et al.* (2008) described four new species of the genus from China, extending the distribution of the species of the genus beyond the Indian subcontinent.

Tambocerus was included in the subfamily Selenocephalinae based on the transversely striated foremargin of the head and strigated first valvulae by Zhang & Webb (1996). Zahniser & Dietrich (2010) treated Selenocephalinae as a junior synonym of Deltocephalinae but included the group as the tribe Selenocephalini. The head and female first valvulae characters of *Tambocerus* mentioned earlier are also found in some genera of Penthimiini and Mukariini of Deltocephalinae. The genus has a distinctly Y-shaped tentorium, the male pygofer with macrosetae, subgenital plates with macrosetae arranged loosely in one row, and the connective Y-shaped with an elongate stem. *Tambocerus* will run to Athysanini in the most recent key to tribes of Deltocephalinae (Zahniser & Dietrich 2008). Hence *Tambocerus* is here transferred to the rather poorly characterized deltocephaline tribe Athysanini (new placement). The species of this genus are occasionally collected from dry deciduous forests of sandal in south India and also at relatively high elevations (above 2000m). Pruthi (1934a) reported *Tambocerus viraktamathi* Rao (misidentified as *Selenocephalus disperatus* Melichar, see below) on *Dodonaea viscosa* (Sapindaceae) and *Webera corymbosa* Willd. (Rubiaceae). In this paper, seven new species of the genus are described and illustrated along with a key for the identification of the species of *Tambocerus* from the Indian subcontinent.

The types of the new species and other material used in the study are deposited in the Natural History Museum,