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New data on the genus *Wiedemannia* Zetterstedt (Diptera: Empididae) from the Caucasus with description of four new species

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Abstract

Currently, 17 species of aquatic dance flies of the genus *Wiedemannia* are known from the Caucasus including four new species: *W. ivkovicæ* sp. nov. (South Ossetia), *W. nartshukæ* sp. nov. (South Ossetia), *W. ossetiana* sp. nov. (South Ossetia) and *W. pseguashæ* sp. nov. (Georgia, South Ossetia). *Wiedemannia* (*Chamaedipsia*) *lota* Walker 1851 (Russia; Georgia) is recorded from the Caucasus for the first time. The inaccuracies in species records from the different countries of the Caucasus have been eliminated. Nine species are recorded for the first time from the territory of Georgia, five species for Abkhazia and one for Russia. The new species are described, all species illustrated and distribution listed. A key to species of *Wiedemannia* from the Caucasus is provided.

Key words: Diptera, Empididae, Clinocerinae, *Wiedemannia*, Palaearctic, Russia, Caucasus, new data, new species

Introduction

The genus *Wiedemannia* Zetterstedt is a large taxon (Diptera: Empididae: Clinocerinae) and currently includes 113 described species of small predatory aquatic Diptera (Sinclair 2007; Yang *et al.* 2007; Raffone 2011; Ivković *et al.* 2012, 2014; Sinclair & Shamshev 2014; Kustov & Zherebilo 2014). Adults of *Wiedemannia* are bluish-grey, long-legged flies, ranging in size from 1 to 5 mm. The genus is distinguished by a distinct notch or carina on the lower margin of the face, a wide gena, and acrostichal setae are often well-developed. Males are recognized by the position of the subepandrial sclerite, a biarticulated phallus, and an undivided clasping cercus. Females are difficult to identify to species unless associated with males (Sinclair 1995).

Species of the genus are very common and diverse in the Palaearctic but also present in the Nearctic, Oriental and Afrotropical realms; only one species has a Holarctic distribution (*Wiedemannia* (*Philolutra*) *simplex* (Loew)) (Sinclair 1997). However, in the Palaearctic only the European fauna of this genus has been extensively studied in several regions: on the mountains of the Pyrenees, European Alps and Balkan Peninsula. Currently 87 species of *Wiedemannia* are known from the territories of Europe and Caucasus (Yang *et al.* 2007; Raffone 2011; Ivković *et al.* 2012, 2014; Sinclair & Shamshev 2014; Kustov & Zherebilo 2014).

The Caucasus occupies a large area between the Sea of Azov, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea showing a great diversity of natural landscapes varying from high mountains to steppe biotopes. As a predominantly mountain group, species of *Wiedemannia* occupies cool, fast-flowing streams, creeks, and rivers. Larvae are predators, occurring on submerged rocks in fast-flowing areas of rivers, among algae and mosses (Sinclair 1997).

Wiedemannia of the Caucasus was first reviewed by Joost (1981) who listed eight species and described five new species: *W.* (*Chamaedipsia*) *beckeri* (Mik, 1889), *W.* (*Wiedemannia*) *braueri* (Mik, 1880), *W.* (*Wiedemannia*) *caucasica* Joost, 1981, *W.* (*Philolutra*) *chvalai* Joost, 1981, *W.* (*Philolutra*) *klausnitzeri* Joost, 1981, *W.* (*Philolutra*) *pseudovallanti* Joost, 1981, *W.* (*Philolutra*) *vallanti* Joost, 1981, *W.* (*Eucelidia*) *zetterstedti* (Fallén, 1826) (= *W.* (*Eucelidia*) *escheri* (Zetterstedt, 1838)). In addition, Engel (1940) listed *W.* (*Philolutra*) *fallaciosa* (Loew, 1873) from this region. Recently Sinclair & Shamshev (2014) described a new species from the Caucasus, *W. kustovi*