



Two new species of *Astenus* Dejean, 1833 (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Paederinae) from Mêdog, China

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Abstract

Two new species of the paederine rove beetle genus *Astenus* Dejean, 1833 are described: *A. medogensis* sp. nov. and *A. yarangensis* sp. nov., both collected from Mêdog County, Xizang, China. Color plates of the habitus, antennae, abdominal segments VII–IX of the males, as well as the aedeagal structures are provided. In addition, a checklist of all known 30 species (including the two new species) of the genus *Astenus* from China is included.

Key words: taxonomy, Paederinae, *Astenus*, new taxa, Mêdog

Introduction

The genus *Astenus* Dejean, 1833 belongs to the subtribe Astenina (Staphylinidae: Paederinae: Lathrobiini), with *Staphylinus angustatus* Paykull, 1789 (= *Astenus gracilis* Paykull, 1789) as its type species fixed by subsequent designation (Westwood 1838). This genus is a group of predatory rove beetles with 485 species and 22 subspecies with a cosmopolitan distribution worldwide (Li *et al.* 2019; Anlaş 2025; Newton 2025) mainly in dry and semi-dry biotopes, preferring to inhabit under rocks and stones (Bottinelli & Drugmand 2025), while a small number of species occasionally occur in moist habitats and riparian zones of rivers and lakes (Anlaş 2017; Ferreira 2023). Most species are brachypterous with limited distributions (Assing 2003a, b; Anlaş 2024) and a few species may have strong flight capabilities with wide distribution (Coiffait 1971, 1984).

This genus is a species-rich taxon at the generic level because of species having complicated and variable external characteristics and has a worldwide distribution (Palm 1936; Coiffait 1960, 1971; Li *et al.* 2019; Newton 2025). For a long time, taxonomic research on this taxon has progressed very slowly, and systematic faunistic studies are even scarcer. Although it has been divided into four subgenera (Coiffait 1960, 1982; Newton 2025), no unified, clear, and reliable morphological criteria for subgeneric classification have been established to date (Anlaş 2017; Ferreira 2023), nearly two-thirds of the species can not be assigned to the existing subgenera (Li *et al.* 2019; Anlaş 2020; Newton 2025). From a faunistic comparison, species of the Western Palaearctic Region, especially those of the subgenus *Eurysunius* has been relatively well-studied with concentrated research reports in recent years and most species of this subgenus having myrmecophilous habit of the genus *Tetramorium* Mayr (Coiffait 1960; Assing 2015; Anlaş 2014, 2015, 2017, 2021; Ferreira 2023).

In China, there are 28 species of the genus reported in all erenow, primarily distributed in southern China (Li *et al.* 2019; Anlaş 2025; Newton 2025). Among them, all except two species (i.e., *A. tricoloricornis* Rougemont, 2017 and *A. taiwanus* Ito, 1996) were described more than 90 years ago, which means basic data on this taxon remain lacking (Li *et al.* 2019; Newton 2025), further surveys are imperative and it is certain that a great many new species are waiting for being discovered within Chinese fauna because of long remained unexplored time. We initiated the research on species of the genus *Astenus* of China from Mêdog as a breakthrough point where is located in the

southeast of the Xizang Autonomous Region, Southwest of China with a subtropical humid climate, significant altitude difference, and remarkable vertical climatic zonation (Li *et al.* 2020). Due to the unique ecology, it boasts abundant plant resources and serves as a research hotspot with high insect species diversity (Li *et al.* 2020).

Based on specimens collected in recent years, new species of the paederine group in Mêdog County are frequently discovered (such as the genera *Pinopellis* and *Cephalochetus*, unpublished data, Li *et al.*), yet there is a lack of specialized research on the genus *Astenus*. Therefore, we specifically sorted out the specimens collected from this area and two additional *Astenus* species were identified as new, namely: *A. medogensis* **sp. nov.** and *A. yarangensis* **sp. nov.**, which are described here.

In total, the number of species of the genus *Astenus* in China has increased to 30 (including the two new species) and the opportunity to conduct more detailed research within Chinese fauna will continuously rise in the near future.

Material and methods

The dried specimens were softened in hot water at 60 °C for about 4–8 hours (upon the collection age and preservation conditions) for dissection of the abdominal terminalia. The male genitalia were soaked in 10% KOH solution at 30 °C for about 10–40 minutes (depending on the degree of sclerotization). The surrounding soft tissues were immediately removed, and the dissected parts were preserved in glycerin in plastic microvials with stoppers for subsequent observation and photography. At least two specimens were dissected for each species in this study.

Observations, dissections, and measurements were conducted under a Zeiss SteREO Discovery V20 stereomicroscope. Photos of the habitus, sternites, and genitalia were taken with an Olympus C7070 digital camera. Images were combined using Helicon Focus version 6.7.1 image stacking software (<http://www.heliconsoft.com>).

All specimens listed in the present study are deposited in the Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China (IZCAS).

The following abbreviations are used in the descriptions and all measurements are given in millimeters:

ABW—abdomen with (widest portion of the abdomen);

AEL—aedeagal length (from base of median lobe to apical part);

AEW—aedeagal width (greatest width of aedeagus);

AL—antennal length (length of one antenna);

BL—body length (from anterior margin of labrum to end of abdomen);

EL—elytra length (from humeral angle to posterior margin);

EW—elytra width (greatest width of elytra);

ESL—elytra suture length (from apex of scutellum to apex of elytral suture);

EYL—eye length (longitudinal length of eye in dorsal view);

FL—forebody length (from anterior margin of labrum to posterior margin of elytra);

HL—head length (from anterior margin of clypeal to posterior constriction of head);

HW—head width (greatest width of head, including eyes);

PL—pronotum length (from anterior margin of pronotum to its posterior margin);

PW—pronotum width (greatest width of pronotum);

TL—temple length (vertical length from the posterior margin of compound eye to the posterior margin of head);

SNUC—Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China.

Taxonomy

Genus *Astenus* Dejean, 1833

Type species: *Staphylinus angustatus* Paykull, 1789 (= *Staphylinus gracilis* Paykull, 1789), fixed by subsequent designation (Westwood 1838: 17).

Distribution. Asia, Europe, Africa, Oceania.

Description of new species

Astenus medogensis sp. nov.

(Figs 1, 2)

Type material. HOLOTYPE: CHINA: Xizang, ♂, Mabian Village, Deguo Bridge (马边村德果大桥) 837 m, N29.4019°, E95.3772°, 18.VIII.2015, leg. Hong-Bing Liang (IZCAS). PARATYPE: 1 ♀, same data as holotype (IZCAS).

Diagnosis. Externally, *Astenus medogensis* sp. nov. and *A. suffusus* (Sharp, 1874) are slightly similar, but they can be distinguished by the morphological characteristics as follows: the head of *A. medogensis* sp. nov. is prolonged anteriorly, with the frontoclypeus relatively broad and the pronotum is oval-shaped. In contrast, the frontoclypeus region of *A. suffusus* (Sharp) is normal, and the anterolateral angles of the pronotum are slightly prominent.

Based on the secondary sexual characteristics: the sternite VII of the new species bears setae along the entire margin, which are long and thick; in contrast, the latter has such setae only on the median third of the margin which are short and slender. The median emargination of sternite VIII is deep and parallel, slightly longer than one-third of the sternite length; whereas the median emargination of the latter is short, slightly shorter than one-fourth of the sternite length. The aedeagal differences of the two species are far more pronounced (*A. suffusus* det. Jia-Yao Hu, SNUC).



FIGURE 1. *Astenus medogensis* sp. nov. A. Habitus. B. Sternite VII in male. C. Sternite VIII in male. D. Tergite VII in male. E. Aedeagus in ventral view. F. Aedeagus in lateral view. G. Aedeagus in dorsal view. H. Tergites IX and X in male. Scale bars. A: 0.5 mm; B–H: 0.2 mm.

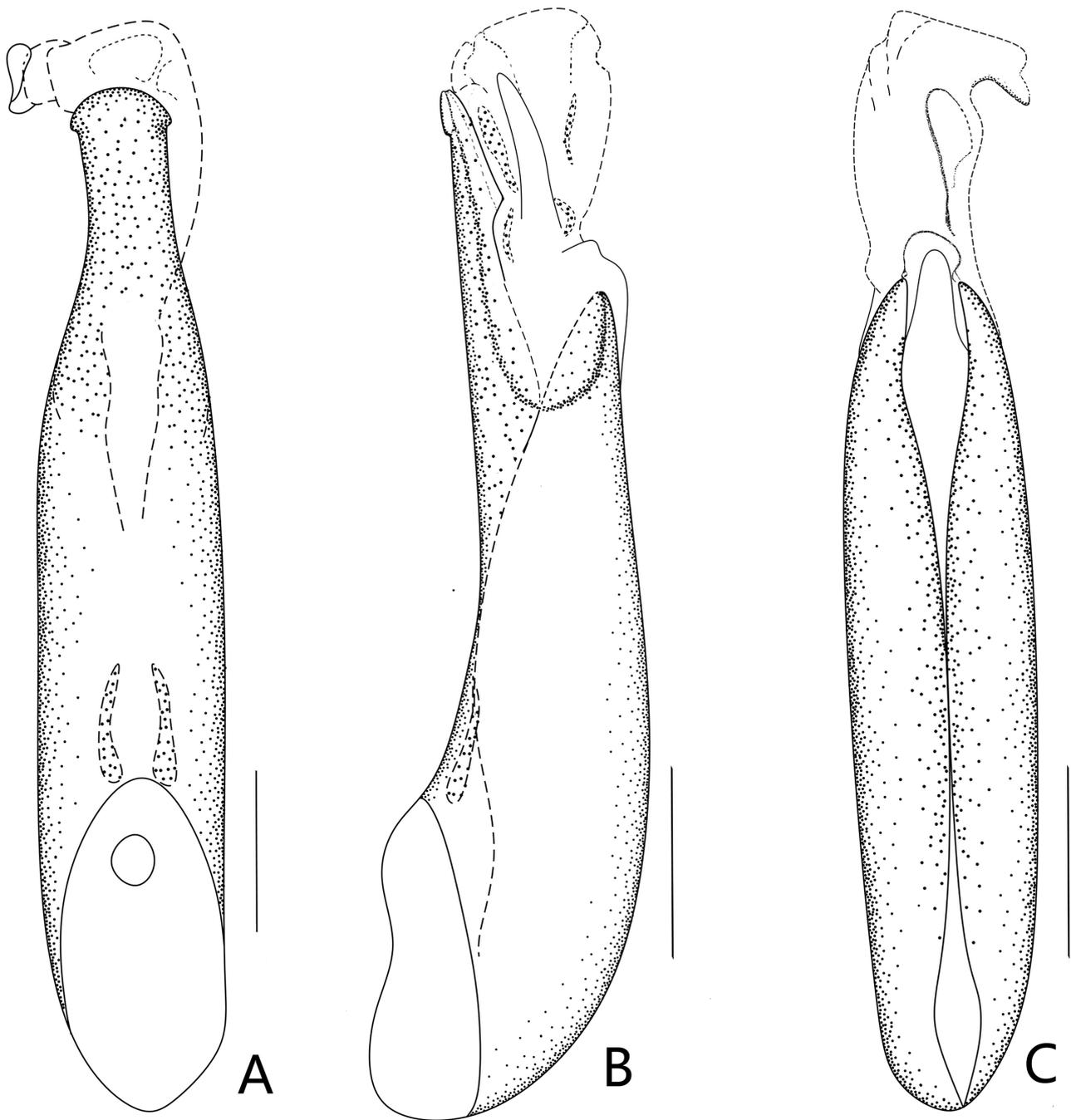


FIGURE 2. *Astenus medogensis* sp. nov. Linear drawings of aedeagus. **A.** Aedeagus in ventral view. **B.** Aedeagus in lateral view. **C.** Aedeagus in dorsal view. Scale bars. 0.2 mm.

Measurement. BL: 6.8–6.9 mm; FL: 3.62–3.65 mm (all specimens). HL: PL: EL: AL = 1.40: 1.10: 1.15: 2.15; HW: PW: EW: ABW = 0.89: 0.75: 0.84: 0.91(average).

Description. Habitus as in Fig. 1A. Coloration: Body darkish brown with segment VII of abdomen black, antennomeres and legs yellowish brown, elytra brown with pair of black and longitudinally elliptical spots on both sides.

Head obviously oblate with subdued shine, longer than wide ($HL/HW = 1.52$), broadest across eyes. Eyes small, elongate and oblate, shorter than $1/3$ of the head ($HL/EYL = 3.38$), gena or temple (ratio eye: gena: temple = 1: 1.05: 1.25; all in dorsal view; Fig. 1A). Vertex oblate, dorsal surface with shallow, areolate, umbilicate and dense punctures with interstices between punctures. Surface near the posterior margin of the head impunctate. Frontoclypeus distinctly prolonged anteriorly and broad with dorsal surface slightly depressed and grooved

transversely, punctures denser than vertex. Lateral contours behind eyes slightly converging with posterior angles obsolete. Antennae relatively long, length of each antennomere (except for II) approximately or more than 3 times of its breadth (Fig. 1A).

Pronotum ovate and slightly convex, distinctly longer than wide (average PL/PW = 1.47) and slightly narrower than head or elytra, broadest in apical 1/4 and narrowed posteriorly. Punctures on pronotum congruent with those on frontoclypeus.

Elytra parallel laterally, longer than wide (average EL/EW = 1.37), elytral suture more than half of elytra (ESL/EL = 0.72). Punctures on surface non-umbilicate, deeper but slightly smaller than those of pronotum or head. Humeral angles obsolete, wings reduced completely. Legs rather long with tarsomere 1 of meso- and metatarsi about twice as long as tarsomere 2, respectively.

Abdomen elongate, widest at segment VII where wider than forebody. Tergites III–VI with distinct palisade fringe on posterior margin with punctation non-umbilicate, deep, coarse, and larger than those on tergite VII which without this fringe. Tergite VIII with posterior margin slightly rounded (Fig. 1D).

Sternites III–VI with punctures similar to tergites. Sternite VII broadly emarginated and posterior margin with 19 regular and pectinate setae thick and hard (Fig. 1B). Sternite VIII with posteriorly middle incision narrow, parallel, and about 1/3 of sternite, pubescence unmodified (Fig. 1C). In genital segment IX, lateral processes extremely slender (Fig. 1H)

Aedeagus (Figs 1E–G, 2A–C), slender and symmetrical, AEL/AEW = 4.58. Ventral sclerite long and depressed in middle, apex broad and rounded in ventral view. Dorsal sclerite small, rhomboid and embedded in enclosure of the ventral sclerite. Internal sac with several well sclerotized and irregular processes extending from membranous sac.

Female. Sternites VII and VIII without any modifications.

Distribution. The species was collected in Mêdog County, Xizang Autonomous Region, Southwest of China, at altitude of 837 m.

Etymology. The specific epithet is derived from the type locality Mêdog, a county of Xizang Autonomous Region, China.

Astenus yarangensis sp. nov.

(Figs 3, 4)

Type material. HOLOTYPE: CHINA: Xizang, ♂, Nyingchi City, Mêdog County (墨脱县), Yarang Power Station (亚让电站), 720 m, N29.2793°, E95.2534°, 17.VI.2010, leg. Hong-Bin Liang (IZCAS). PARATYPES: 1 ♀, same data as holotype; Xizang, 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Nyingchi City, Mêdog County, Mêdog Town (墨脱乡), Yarang Village (亚让村), 792 m, N29.2964°, E95.2772°, 23.VII.2015, leg. Hong-Bing Liang (IZCAS).

Diagnosis. Morphologically, *A. yarangensis* sp. nov. is more similar to *A. medogensis* sp. nov., with both having the frontoclypeus extended anteriorly; the elytral markings are slightly different and thus not easy to distinguish. However, they can be distinguished by secondary sexual characteristics, especially the sternites VII–VIII. In the sternite VII of *A. yarangensis* sp. nov., there are 15 setae only at approximately the median half of the posterior margin; while *A. medogensis* sp. nov. has a total of 19 setae on the entire posterior margin. In the sternite VIII, the posteromedian notch of the former is wider and gradually expanded backwards, while the latter is narrower with parallel sides.

Measurement. BL: 7.3–7.4 mm; FL: 3.75–3.79 mm (all specimens). HL: PL: EL: AL = 1.29: 1.03: 1.22: 2.08; HW: PW: EW: ABW = 1.01: 0.91: 1.04: 1.04 (average).

Description. Habitus as in Fig. 3A. Coloration: whole body blackish brown and faintly shining. Mandibles, antennomeres, legs yellowish brown. Elytra blackish brown with margin of posterior half of elytral suture, posterior angles and margins brownish yellow.

Head obviously flattened with subdued shine, longer than wide (HL/HW = 1.29), broadest across eyes. Eyes small, convex laterally, slightly shorter than 1/3 of the head (HL/EYL = 3.13) approximately as long as length of postocular region (ratio eye: gena: temple = 1:1.02:1.05; all in dorsal view, Fig. 3A). Vertex oblate, dorsal surface with shallow, areolate, umbilicate and dense punctures with interstices between punctures. Surface near the posterior margin of the head impunctate. Frontoclypeus slightly prolonged anteriorly and broad, with dorsal surface slightly depressed and grooved transversely, punctures denser than vertex. Lateral contours behind eyes rounded

with posterior angles obsolete. Antennae relatively short, length of each antennomere (except for II) approximately or short than 2 times of its breadth (Fig. 3A).

Pronotum ovate, distinctly longer than wide (average PL/PW = 1.14), narrower than head or elytra, slightly convex, broadest at apical 1/3 and distinctly narrower posteriorly. Punctures on surface of pronotum similar to and a little larger than those on frontoclypeus of head.

Elytra parallel laterally, longer than wide (average EL/EW = 1.18), elytral suture approximately half as long as elytra (ESL/EL = 0.75); punctures on surface non-umbilicate, deeper and smaller than those of pronotum or head. Humeral angles obsolete and round, wings reduced completely. Legs long, tarsomere 1 of meso- and metatarsi shorter than twice length of tarsomere 2, respectively.

Abdomen elongate, widest at segment VI where as wide as elytra. Tergites III–VI with distinct palisade fringe on posterior margin, punctation non-umbilicate, much smaller than those on elytra. Tergite VII without palisade fringe, and punctation smaller than that of tergites III–VI. Tergite VIII with posterior margin slightly rounded (Fig. 3D).

Sternites III–VI with punctures similar to tergites. Sternite VII broadly emarginated, middle of posterior margin with 15 regular, pectinate thick and hard setae (Fig. 3B). Sternite VIII with middle incision broad, gradually widen posteriorly, and about 1/4 of sternite, pubescence unmodified (Fig. 3C). In the genital segment IX, lateral processes moderately long (Fig. 3H)

Aedeagus (Figs 3E–G, 4A–C), slender and symmetrical, AEL/AEW = 3.89. Ventral sclerite gradually narrowed posteriorly with apex rounded and hooked ventrally in lateral view. Dorsal sclerite small, irregular and embedded in the enclosure of the ventral sclerite. Internal sac with pair of weak sclerotized processes extending from membranous sac.

Female. Sternites VII and VIII without any modifications.

Distribution. The species was also collected in Mêdog County, Nyingchi City, Xizang Autonomous Region, Southwest of China, at altitudes between 720–792 m.

Etymology. The specific epithet is derived from the type locality, Yarang Village, south of Mêdog County.



FIGURE 3. *Astenus yarangensis* sp. nov. **A.** Habitus. **B.** Sternite VII in male. **C.** Sternite VIII in male. **D.** Tergite VII in male. **E.** Aedeagus in ventral view. **F.** Aedeagus in lateral view. **G.** Aedeagus in dorsal view. **H.** Tergites IX and X in male. Scale bars. A: 0.5 mm; B–H: 0.2 mm.

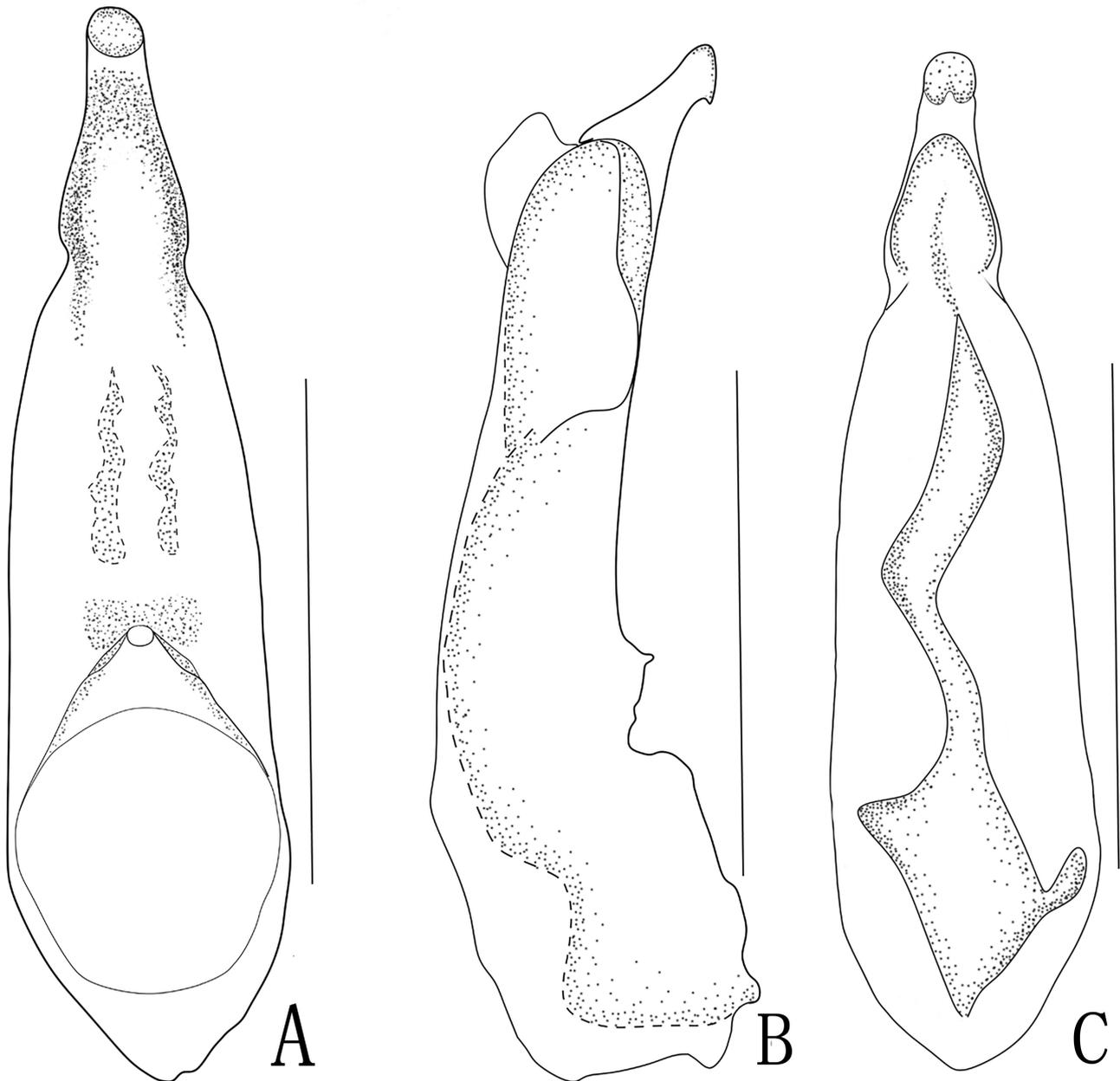


FIGURE 4. *Astenus yarangensis* sp. nov. Linear drawings of aedeagus. **A.** Aedeagus in ventral view. **B.** Aedeagus in lateral view. **C.** Aedeagus in dorsal view. Scale bars. 0.2 mm.

List of *Astenus* species from China

[30 species including the two new species described here]

A. (Astenopleuritus) flavescens Scheerpeltz, 1933

China (Guangxi, Yunnan, Hong Kong); **Asia:** India (Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Uttarakhand, West Bengal), Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia.

A. (Astenopleuritus) gratellus (Fauvel, 1879)

China (Hong Kong); **Asia:** India (Maharashtra, Mumbai, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, West Bengal), Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Vietnam, Indonesia (Java, Sumatra).

A. (Astenus) angulatus (Sharp, 1874)

China (Hong Kong, Taiwan); **Asia:** Japan (Honshu), Ryukyu Is. (Amami-Oshima, Tokunoshima).

- A. (Astenus) bimaculatus* (Erichson, 1840)
China (Taiwan); **Asia:** Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan; **Africa:** Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia; **Europe:** Madeira, Russia (Caucase).
- A. (Astenus) indicus* (Kraatz, 1859)
China (Shanghai, Taiwan); **Asia:** Afghanistan, Iran, India (Kerala, Maharashtra, Mumbai, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, West Bengal), Japan, Myanmar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Turkey; **Africa:** Canary Islands, Egypt, Tanzania; **Oceania:** Australia.
- A. (Astenus) maculatus* Cameron, 1920
China (Yunnan, Hong Kong); **Asia:** India (Tamil Nadu), Thailand, Vietnam.
- A. (Astenus) maculipennis* (Kraatz, 1859)
China (Guangxi, Taiwan); **Asia:** Japan (Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku), Ryukyu Is., South Korea, India (Kerala, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal); Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia; **Africa:** Madagascar, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Mauritius.
- A. (Astenus) porosus* (Sharp, 1889)
China (Hong Kong); **Asia:** Japan (Honshu, Shikoku), South Korea.
- A. (Astenus) varians* Cameron, 1931
China (Yunnan, Hong Kong); **Asia:** India (Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand), Myanmar, Thailand.
- A. (Eurysunius) setifer* Cameron, 1930
China (Anlaş 2025: 572); **Asia:** Japan, South Korea.
- A. arrowi* Bernhauer, 1939
China (Jiangxi).
- A. biplagiatus* (Motschulsky, 1858)
China (Taiwan); **Asia:** India, East Indies.
- A. brevipes* (Sharp, 1874)
China (Heilongjiang, Taiwan).
- A. chloroticus* (Sharp, 1874)
China (Hong Kong, Taiwan); **Asia:** Japan (Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku, Tsushima I.), South Korea, Ogasawara Is., Ryukyu Is.
- A. concolor* (Kraatz, 1859)
China (Taiwan); **Asia:** India (West Bengal),
- A. formosanus* Bernhauer, 1939
China (Hong Kong, Taiwan); **Asia:** India, Singapore.
- A. gracilentus* (Fauvel, 1879)
China (Hong Kong); **Asia:** India (Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal), Bangladesh, Singapore.
- A. horni* Bernhauer, 1939
China (Taiwan).
- A. latifrons* (Sharp, 1874)
China (Taiwan); **Asia:** Japan (Honshu, Kyushu), Ryukyu Is. (Kume-jima Island).
- A. medogensis* **sp. nov.**
China (Xizang: Mêdog).
- A. parvipennis* Bernhauer, 1922
China (Taiwan).
- A. rufobrunneus* Bernhauer, 1939
China (Jiangsu).
- A. sauteri* Bernhauer, 1922
China (Taiwan).
- A. sinoseptentrionalis* (Jacot, 1923)
China (Shandong).
- A. taiwanus* Ito, 1996
China (Taiwan); **Asia:** Ryukyu Is. (Ishigaki).

- A. taprobanus* Cameron, 1919
China (Hong Kong); **Asia**: Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia (Sumatra).
- A. terminalis* Cameron, 1931
China (Hong Kong); **Asia**: India (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal).
- A. tricoloricornis* Rougemont, 2017
China (Hong Kong).
- A. walkerianus* Bernhauer, 1929
China (Zhejiang).
- A. yarangensis* **sp. nov.**
China (Xizang: Mêdog).

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墨脱黑尾隐翅属 *Astenus* 二新种（鞘翅目：隐翅虫科：毒隐翅虫亚科）的描述

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摘要: 描述西藏墨脱县黑尾隐翅虫属 *Astenus* 二新种, 即墨脱黑尾隐翅虫 *A. medogensis* **sp. nov.** 和亚让黑尾隐翅虫 *A. yarangensis* **sp. nov.**; 提供了新种的整体形态、生殖节片及阳茎的三面观察图; 更新了中国黑尾隐翅虫属已知30个物种 (包括墨脱新种) 的名录。

关键词: 分类; 毒隐翅虫亚科; 新分类单元; 黑尾隐翅属; 墨脱