

***Baeocera chamba* sp. nov., an unusual new Scaphisomatini
(Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Scaphidiinae) from North India**

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LÖBL I. 2023: *Baeocera chamba* sp. nov., an unusual new Scaphisomatini (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Scaphidiinae) from North India. *Acta Musei Moraviae, Scientiae biologicae* **108(1–2)**: 35–38. – A new species of *Baeocera* is described from Uttarakhand, Chamba District. It is notable by its unique aedeagal characters. The external characters provide also features clearly separating the species from all Indian and Himalayan congeners.

Keywords. Shining fungus beetles, taxonomy, new species, Uttarakhand

Introduction

The myxomycetophagous genus *Baeocera* Erichson, 1845 contains 319 species distributed throughout all continents, the Antarctic naturally excepted. They are often common in moist forest floor debris, notably in the subtropical and tropical biotas. Nevertheless, they have been rarely found by field workers who have not used adequate collecting methods, such as sieving and extracting samples in Berlese or Winkler-Moczarski devices. This explains why they are under-represented in many large collections, even in those of the Museum of Natural History of London, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle of Paris, Museum für Naturkunde of Berlin, or Naturhistorisches Museum of Vienna (pers. obs.). To date, only a fraction of scaphidiines available in collections have been studied. Nevertheless, the *Baeocera* as well as other scaphidiines of the Himalayan and Sub-Himalayan regions of Nepal and of India west of Nepal may be considered well known (LÖBL, 1977, 1984, 1986a, 1986b, 1992, 2001, 2003, 2005, LÖBL & TANG, 2013, LÖBL & OGAWA, 2016, LÖBL, 2019). Besides, the species richness of the group decreases westward (pers. obs.). It was therefore a surprise to find amongst various species collected by the coleopterists Z. Kejval and M. Trýzna a new species of *Baeocera* coming from the western part of north Indian state of Uttarakhand. It is notable by its aedeagal characters and may be readily distinguished from its congeners. Thus, its description is considered justified, though only a single specimen is available for study.

Material and methods

The material examined is deposited in the collection of the Muséum d'histoire naturelle, Geneva (MHNG).

The body length is measured from the anterior pronotal margin to the posterior inner angles of elytra. The widths are measured at the widest points of the respective body parts. The length/width ratios of antennomeres are measured on slide-mounted antennae

at magnification of 200 times. The length/width of mesepimera refer to their exposed part. Statements about metaventral and abdominal punctation do not refer to punctures margining submecoal lines and basal margin of ventrite I. The sides of the aedeagus refer to their morphological sides with the ostium situated dorsally, while it is in resting position rotated 90°. The dissected body parts are embedded in Euparal and fixed on a separate card on the same pin as the specimen.

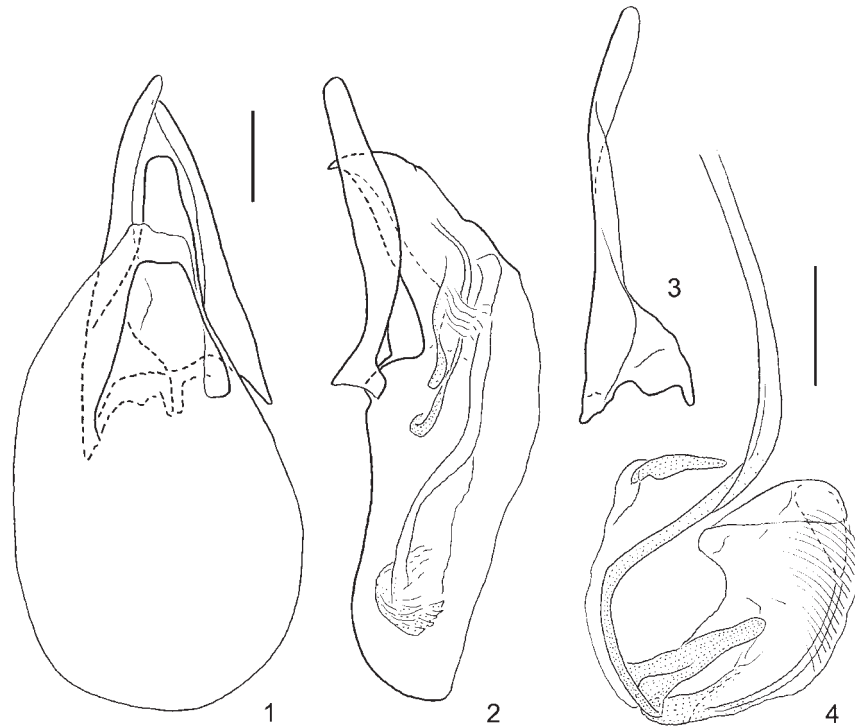
Results

Baeocera chamba sp. nov.

Figs 1–4

Type material. Holotype, male, N. INDIA, Uttaranchal state, 30 km N of Rishikesh, NW of CHAMBA, Arakot vill. env. 1500 m, 29–31.vii.2003 Z. Kejval & M. Trýzna lgt. (MHNG).

Description. Length 1.98 mm, width 1.42 mm. Head with frons and vertex very finely punctate, with shortest intervals between eyes 0.22 mm, nearly a half of maximum head width with eyes in dorsal view. Head, body rufous, femora and tibiae uniformly rufous, tarsi yellowish, antennomeres I and II light rufous, antennomeres II to VI yellowish, the following antennomeres light brown. Length/width ratios of antennomeres III 38/8: IV 39/8: V 45/10: VI 43/9: VII 45/10: VIII 40/10: IX 42/15: X 42/15: XI: 51/15. Lateral margins of pronotum and elytra separately arcuate. Pronotum with lateral margins evenly rounded; lateral margin carinae hardly visible in dorsal view; lateral margin striae impunctate; discal punctation very fine, shallow and poorly delimited, hardly visible at magnification 50 times, Exposed part of scutellum rounded at tip. Elytron weakly narrowed apicad, with lateral margin rounded, lateral margin carinae visible anterior of mid-length in dorsal view, lateral margin stria punctate, apical crenulation distinct near inner angles, sutural stria parallel to suture up to apical third, converging in apical third, curved at base and forming deep basal stria gradually narrowing to basal margin and joined with lateral stria; adsutural area flat, with row of very fine punctures; discal punctation fine, much coarser than pronotal punctation, punctures rather poorly delimited, puncture intervals mostly about two to three times as large as puncture diameters. Hind wings fully developed. Hypomeron smooth. Mesoverter distinctly punctate. Mesepimeron four times as long as wide and slightly more than twice as long as shortest interval to mesocoxa. Mesanepisternum with few extremely fine and scattered punctures. Metaventrite in median part flattened, with rather coarse punctures at each side and posterior smooth mesal stripe; lateral parts of metaventrite with scattered, extremely fine punctures; submesocoxale areas about 0.02 mm long, as long as tenth of shortest interval to metacoxae; submesocoxal lines parallel, coarsely punctate, with punctures not elongate and not extending lateral mesocoxae. Metanepisternum flat, smooth, 0.12 mm wide, with straight, deep, impunctate suture. Ventrite I with basal puncture row interrupted between metacoxae, consisting of coarse punctures separated by slightly elongate wrinkles; punctation extremely fine, similar to that on metaventral sides; macrosetae absent. Ventrites II to IV with pair of admesal macrosetae. Ventrite VI with six macrosetae.



Figs 1–4. *Baeocera chamba* sp. nov., genital characters: **1, 2** – Aedeagus in dorsal and lateral views; **3** – Paramere in ventral view; **4** – Internal sac. Scales = 0.1 mm.

Male. Protarsomeres I to III strongly widened, I somewhat narrower than apex of protibial. Aedeagus (Figs 1–4) 0.70 mm long.

Etymology. The species epithet is the name of the North Indian district in which the species was found.

Differential diagnosis. To date, 14 species of *Baeocera* are known to occur in the north Indian state of Uttarakhand, formerly Uttaranchal Pradesh (LÖBL, 2018). The new species may be distinguished from them, as from all other Old World congeners, by the combination of the following characters: Body about 2 mm long, uniformly light rufous; antennomeres VII and VIII similar, much narrower than antennomere IX; elytron with basal stria deep, gradually approaching basal margin and joining lateral stria; hypomeron smooth, lateral parts of metaventrite extremely finely punctate; metanepisternum broad, with deep, impunctate suture; punctures margining submesocoxal and submetacoxal lines not elongate; abdomen extremely finely punctate; aedeagus symmetrical, weakly sclerotized; median lobe with unsplit dorsal valve overlapping ostium; internal sac bulbous with basal plates and membranous ejaculatory duct free, lacking supporting sclerites. This new species would fall in the key to the Himalayan species of *Baeocera*

(Löbl, 1992) under the couplet 5, to *B. callida* Löbl, 1986 and *B. hamifer* Löbl, 1977, both very distinct externally and by their genital characters. *Baeocera chamba* cannot be placed in any of the recognized species-groups and its relationships to them are unknown.

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