

A NEW SPECIES OF *BRAHMALCIDODES* (ALCIDODINAE: CURCULIONIDAE: COLEOPTERA)¹

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ABSTRACT

A new species of *Brahmalcidodes* Pajni and Dhir, *B. nigromicronychus*, is described. A key to the known Indian species of the genus is also given.

Key words: Alcidodinae, Curculionidae, *Brahmalcidodes*, *Brahmalcidodes micronychus*, *Brahmalcidodes nigromicronychus* sp. nov.

INTRODUCTION

The authors studied 72 species of Alcidodinae during the course of US PL-480 Project (1976-1981), including 10 new species. This study also resulted in the complete generic revision of the subfamily with the recognition of 7 genera including three new genera (Pajni and Dhir, 1987), in place of earlier arrangements (Heller 1917; Klima 1934; Voss 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1962). One of the new species falling under genus *Brahmalcidodes* Pajni and Dhir, which was based on the type species *A. micronychus* Pascoe, is described in this paper. A key to the two, so far, known Indian species of this genus is also given.

The subfamily Alcidodinae includes long snouted Curculionids which can be easily recognized from the forward extension of the elytra which partly cover the pronotum. The genus *Brahmalcidodes* is characterized by the extremely reduced pretarsus which hardly comes out from the two lobes of the third tarsal segment.

Key to the species of genus *Brahmalcidodes*

- 1. Elytra with subapical transverse band not interrupted at suture, each without scaly stripes near base phallobase with a pair of parameral processes *micronychus* (Pascoe)
- Elytra with subapical transverse band interrupted near suture and continued anteriorly on intervals 1-2, each with an oblique scaly stripe near scutellum; phallobase lacking parameral processes. *nigromicronychus* sp. nov.

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Brahmalcidodes nigromicronychus sp. nov.

Fig. 1 a-b

Head black, rugose, coarsely punctate, bare frons flattened, narrower than base of rostrum, with a punctiform median fovea; eyes black, small, subcircular, gently convex. Rostrum black, slightly shorter than prothorax, cylindrical with slightly broadened apex, straight in basal half thence moderately declivous to apex profusely rugose up to antennal insertion; beset with sparse yellowish scales. Antennae black, robust, inserted slightly before middle of rostrum; scape almost as long as funicle, with sparsely clothed distal clavate end; funicle beset with sparse pale appressed setae, funicular segment 1 longer than 2, 2 and 3 equal, 3-6 strongly transverse and progressively increasing in width, 7 continuous with club and shorter than its apical width; club broadest at base thence getting gradually acuminate, first club segment longer than second.

Pronotum black, strongly transverse, parallel-sided in basal two-third thence getting roundly narrowed to apex, with subapical constriction deep, having disc beset with pointed granules becoming low at apical collar region, clothed with minute pale hair, beset with three longitudinal stripes of whitish-yellow plumose scales broad and distinct at base becoming extinguished towards apex, moderately convex, with dorsal apical margin truncate, postocular lobes well-developed, its antiscutellar process subacuminate and slightly depressed. Scutellum ferrugineous, transverse, bare, not enclosed completely by lobes of elytra. Thoracic sterna ferrugineous, profusely rugose, densely clothed with yellowish plumose scales; prosternum deeply incised at its anterior border, procoxae separated by half the distance between mesocoxae, metasternum produced tooth-like towards hind coxae.

Elytra black, broader than prothorax at base, bulged, parallel-sided in basal two-third thence gently narrowed to rounded apex, bulged, having basal lobes moderately produced, elytral pattern consisting of the following bands of whitish-yellow broad plumose scales: a slightly oblique stripe covering basal one-third of intervals 2-3, a backwardly curved transverse band behind the middle running forwards for a short distance on interval 1; intervals broader than striae, beset with extremely dense fine granules, having interval 4 broader and more raised; striae consisting of deep elongate pits separated by narrow interpunctural spaces. Legs black, rugosely punctate, densely clothed with minute plumose scales towards base and short setae towards apex; front femora each bearing a strong triangular tooth with bidentate crest on its outer border; front tibiae each carrying a slender pointed apical tooth, a pair of subapical bristles, and a slight dilatation in the middle on its inner margin; tarsi stout, tarsal segment 1 longer than 2, 2 transverse, 3 rounded and stumpy, claw segment hardly projecting out of the lobes of 3; claws strong, appendiculate, having short and slender inner branches separate. Abdominal sterna ferrugineous, beset with profuse fine wrinkles, densely clothed with yellowish plumose scales, first visible sternite longer than second with the intervening suture distinct, inter abdominal process subacuminate.

Aedeagus tubular getting broadly rounded at apex, weakly sclerotized;

aedeagal apodemes distinctly shorter than aedeagus, swollen at base; endophallus confined to apical half, beset with fine spinules; phallobase ring-shaped, phallobasic apodeme rounded at apex, parameres absent.

Measurements: Body: 5.2 mm. long; 2.4 mm wide; Rostrum: 1.4 long; 0.4 wide.

Type locality: Jawalagiri North Salem; FRI Sandal Insect Survey.

Material Examined: Holotype, Male; deposited in FRI, Dehradun

Remarks: The present species is very close to *micronychus* but differs from it mainly in the ground colour of the body which is black as compared to the reddish-brown ground colour of *micronychus*. Haaf (1964), while describing *micronychus* did mention the occurrence of a black population of the same in Dehra Dun area but he reserved his comments with regard to the specific or subspecific status of this population. Observations made on samples from Jawalagiri show that besides the difference in ground colour of body, the two populations also show important variation in their male genitalia. Whereas, the phallobase of *nigromicronychus* bears a pair of well developed dorsal parameres, the same are totally missing in the *micronychus*.

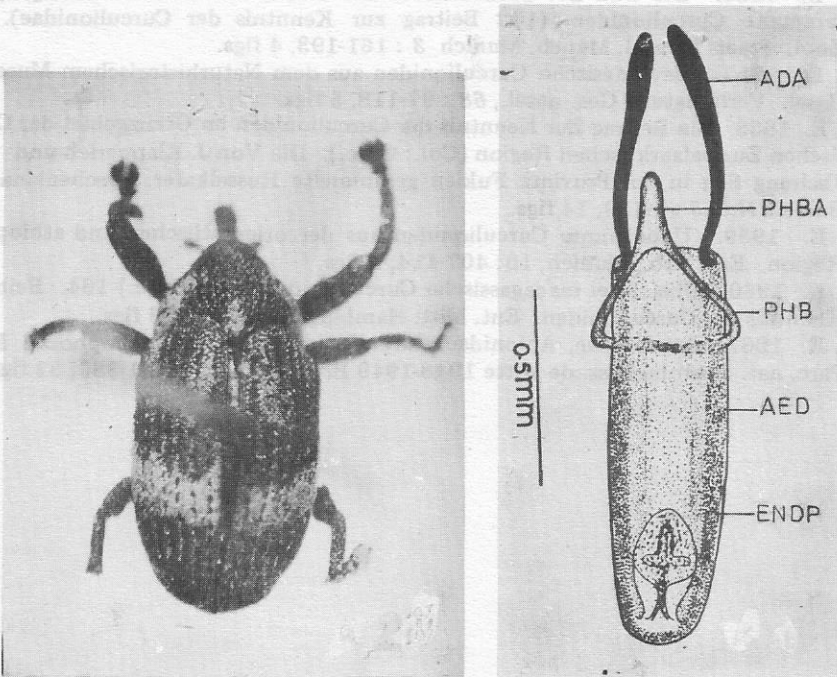


Fig. 1a. Adult; b. male genitalia of *Brahmalcidodes nigromicronychus*, sp. nov. (ADA, aedeagal apodeme; AED, aedeagus; ENDP, endophallic plate PHB, phallobase; PHBA, phallobasic apodeme).

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