

Review of the bee genus *Eremophanta* Popov 1940 (Hymenoptera: Melittidae), with the description of a new species

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Abstract

The small central Asian genus *Eremophanta* (Hymenoptera, Apoidea) is poorly known. We provide a catalogue of the eight species included in this genus and an update of the available diagnoses. One new species, *Eremophanta popovi* **sp. nov.** and the male of *E. fasciata* Popov 1957 are described. A key to species is given and the species ranges are mapped and discussed.

Key words: Melittidae, Central Asia, systematics, biogeography, floral choices, Apoidea, bees

Introduction

According to Engel (2001), the Melittidae are subdivided into four subfamilies: Dasypodinae, Macropidinae, Meganomiinae and Melittinae. These subfamilies consist of 14 genera ranging worldwide, except in Australia and South-America (Michener 1981). Revisions are available for several of these groups, but *Eremophanta* is still unreviewed (Stage 1966; Michener 1981; Whitehead & Steiner 2001; Michez *et al.* 2004a,b; Michez & Patiny 2005). *Eremophanta* is a well-delimited group of small Dasypodinae (Michener 2000). Morphologically, it is characterised by some unique characters among the Melittidae, such as the presence of extensive yellow markings in both sexes, the stigma as long as the first submarginal cell, the second submarginal cell twice as long as the first and the weak differentiation of the male S7 (Popov 1940; Michener 1981). Likewise, from a biogeographical point of view, *Eremophanta* is the group of Melittidae endemic to Central Asia, where the diversity of other genera in the family is conspicuously low (Popov 1957; Michez *et al.* 2004b; Michez & Patiny 2005).