



## New species of *Laxotela* Winterton & Irwin from Australia (Diptera: Therevidae: Agapophytinae)

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### Abstract

Two new species of the endemic Australian stiletto fly genus *Laxotela* Winterton & Irwin are described and figured. *Laxotela elongata* **sp. nov.** is described from Queensland while *Laxotela plata* **sp. nov.** is described from south-eastern mainland Australia. *Laxotela ornata* (Kröber) **comb. nov.** (originally *Spatulipalpa* Kröber) was recently placed as *incertae sedis* within Therevidae, but is herein transferred to *Laxotela*. A revised key to *Laxotela* species is presented.

**Key words:** Stiletto fly, Asiloidea

### Introduction

The dominant subfamily of stiletto flies in Australasia are Agapophytinae, comprising 11 genera with *ca.* 100 described and more than 200 undescribed species (Winterton *et al.* 2001), and representing at least half the therevid biodiversity in the region. If the *Taenogera* genus-group (*sensu* Winterton *et al.* 1999b) is also included within Agapophytinae, as suggested by Winterton (2006), then this number will increase to at least 25 genera with more than 500 species in Australasia and South America, and would represent about a third of the total number of Therevidae species world-wide. As presently defined by Winterton *et al.* (2001), Agapophytinae *sensu stricto* includes the genera *Acatopygia* Kröber, *Acraspisa* Kröber, *Acraspisoides* Hill & Winterton, *Acupalpa* Kröber, *Agapophytus* Guérin, *Belonalys* Kröber, *Bonjeania* Irwin & Lyneborg, *Laxotela* Winterton & Irwin, *Parapsilocephala* Kröber, *Patanothrix* Winterton and *Pipinnipons* Winterton. These genera are restricted to Australia, Papua New Guinea and the eastern provinces of Indonesia, although no single genus is recorded from all three regions (Winterton *et al.* 2001).

*Laxotela* is a distinctive genus closely related to *Belonalys* (Winterton & Irwin 1999). Both genera have velutum patches on the fore and hind femora and gonocoxites, open wing cell  $m_3$ , and males have an enlarged ventral lobe on the genitalia. Winterton & Irwin (1999) described *Laxotela* with five constituent species, *L. gaimarii* Winterton & Irwin, *L. hauseri* Winterton & Irwin, *L. holstoni* Winterton & Irwin, *L. metzi* Winterton & Irwin and *L. whitei* Winterton & Irwin. In their phylogenetic revision of Agapophytinae using both molecular and morphological data, Winterton *et al.* (2001) diagnosed *Laxotela* again and placed it with *Belonalys* as an intermediate clade sister to *Agapophytus*+(*Pipinnipons*+*Acupalpa*). *Laxotela* has a distinct southern, or Bassian, distribution in Australia with the most northerly record being collections of *L. gaimarii* and *L. metzi* from Carnarvon National Park in Central Queensland.

The genus *Spatulipalpa* Kröber was originally described by Kröber (192) containing two species, *S. ornata* Kröber and *S. paradoxa* Kröber. *Spatulipalpa paradoxa* was subsequently designated the type species of *Spatulipalpa* by Irwin & Lyneborg (1989) and transferred to *Acatopygia*, thus synonymising the genus. *Spatulipalpa ornata* Kröber was not transferred to *Acatopygia*, but instead was left *incertae sedis* within Ther-