



A new genus of Conopidae from Europe (Diptera)

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Abstract

The monotypic genus *Merziella* **gen. nov.** (Palearctic Region: Europe) is described. A key to the genera of the subfamily Myopinae is presented.

Key words: Myopinae, *Merziella*, *Thecophora*, taxonomy, **gen. nov.**, Palearctic, key

Introduction

While preparing a key for the European species of *Thecophora* Rondani it became evident that the rarely encountered species *Thecophora longirostris* Lyneborg has many more characters which clearly distinguish it from all other *Thecophora* species than have been referred to in previously published accounts (Lyneborg 1962; Chvála 1965; Smith 1967; Bankowska 1974, 1979, 1981; Zimina 1988, 2000; Rivosecchi 1996; Tomasovic 2000). The male genitalia in particular are obviously different to those of other *Thecophora*. While preparing a key for the genera of the European Conopidae it became apparent that several of these genitalic characters are significant at the generic level. Ultimately it became evident that *T. longirostris* does not belong in the genus *Thecophora*. It shares important characters with several other conopid genera but does not fit into any of the currently accepted genera. Therefore a new monotypic conopid genus is proposed in this paper.

Systematic account

Description of *Merziella* **gen. nov.**

(figs 1–19)

Material examined. 2♂ 1♀ no date, "Schlesien", leg. Letzner, coll. Senckenberg Deutsches Entomologisches Institut, Müncheberg (SDEI); BULGARIA: 1♀, 11.–25.vi.1998, Sofia, University Experimental Farm, c. 600 m, leg. P. V. Atanassova, coll. Universiteit van Amsterdam, Instituut voor Taxonomische Zoologie, Zoologisch Museum, Amsterdam (ZMAN); GERMANY: 1♂, 15.vii.1889, Brandenburg, Fürstenberg i. M., leg. Konow, coll. SDEI; GREECE: 1♂ 1♀, 23.vi.2004, Lesbos, 3.8 km SSE Agiasos, 760 m, 39°3'17"N 26°23'50"E, chestnut forest, at *Crepis* spec., leg. M. Kapsali, coll. Jens-Hermann Stuke, Leer (PJHS); ITALY: 1♂, 20.vii., Rom, Arsoli, collector unknown, coll. PJHS; ROMANIA: 1♂, 16.vii.1912, Dacia, Mehadia, leg. Oldenberg, coll. SDEI; 1♂, 18.vii.1912, ditto, coll. PJHS.

Diagnosis. The monotypic genus *Merziella* can easily be identified as belonging in the subfamily Myopinae by the following suite of characters: ocelli present; filiform arista either dorsally or subapically on basal flagellomere; face lacking obvious carina; proboscis doubly bent, with a long labellum; lack of a subcostal-radial-crossvein sc-r. Within the Myopinae *Merziella* is distinguished from all other genera by the obviously elongated proboscis (figs 1, 5) and the characteristic male postabdomen with its unique long sclerotised postgonite evagination (figs 15: poe, 18: poe, 19: poe) and 'window' in the anteriorly directed sheath of the hypandrium (fig. 18: whys). The combination of characters described in the key below distinguishes *Merziella* from other Myopinae in greater detail.

Acknowledgements

Maurizio Mei (Rome) sent specimens for preparation. Joel Gibson (Guelph) sent comments to the wing venation of *Merziella*. David Clements (Cardiff) checked the English and made various comments and additions.

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