



## Review of the leafhopper genus *Pythamus* Melichar (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae: Evacanthinae) in the Indian subcontinent

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### Abstract

The genus *Pythamus* Melichar (type species: *P. dealbatus* Melichar) is redefined. The genus *Dussana* Distant (type species: *D. quaerenda* Distant) is treated as a junior synonym of *Pythamus*. Three new species, *Pythamus biramosus* **sp. nov.** (India: Karnataka), *P. bispinosus* **sp. nov.** (India: Tamil Nadu, Kerala) and *P. montanus* **sp. nov.** (India: Tamil Nadu) in addition to *P. dealbatus* are described and illustrated. *Dussana quaerenda* is treated as a junior synonym of *P. dealbatus*. *Dussana assamensis* Ramakrishnan is transferred to the genus *Onukia*. A key to species of *Pythamus* is also provided.

**Key words:** Homoptera, Auchenorrhyncha, morphology, distribution, taxonomy

### Introduction

Evacanthinae are one of the smaller subfamilies of the large family Cicadellidae with over 14 genera and 100 species known from the world. The group, often considered as a tribe in the subfamily Cicadellinae (Oman *et al.* 1990), was recently reinstated to subfamily status including in addition to Evacanthini, the tribes Nirvanini, Balbillini and Pagaroniini (Dietrich, 2004). The tribe Evacanthini is characterized by the frontoclypeus having a complete longitudinal carina, front femora with more than one enlarged basal macrosetae (Fig. 42) and the hind leg lacking platellae on the pecten of the first basitarsomere (Fig. 3). The group is found both in the Holarctic and the Oriental regions, the diversity of genera being greater in the Oriental region than in the Holarctic (Oman *et al.*, 1990).

Melichar (1903) described the genus *Pythamus* (type species: *Pythamus dealbatus* Melichar) from Sri Lanka. Baker (1915, 1923) added three species from the Indo-Malayan region to this genus. He treated the genus *Pythamus* under his subfamily Pythaminae (Baker, 1915) and later raised it to a family. However, Pythaminae was suppressed as a synonym of Evacanthini by Oman *et al.* (1990). Distant (1908) described the genus *Dussana* (type species: *Dussana quaerenda* Distant) from Sri Lanka and later Ramakrishnan (1989) added *D. assamensis* from Assam.

As part of a revision of the leafhoppers of the Indian subcontinent, examination of leafhoppers collected from south India and also types of *Pythamus dealbatus* and *Dussana quaerenda* revealed that the latter two species are conspecific, resulting in the synonymy of the two genera, and that the specimens assigned to *D. quaerenda* by the Indian workers, Pruthi (1934) and Datta (1972, 1988) represent two new species of *Pythamus* (*P. montanus* and *P. bispinosus*), described below. In addition, it was also discovered that there are three undescribed species of this group in south India. We present the results of these studies in this paper.

The following abbreviations are used for the depositories of material used in this study.