



<http://dx.doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.3755.6.6>

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:A9527F09-E3F4-4F23-8EFD-90501AD29DEC>

## New generic synonyms in the Palaeotropical genus *Urothrips* (Thysanoptera: Phlaeothripinae) with one new species from Seychelles

MANFRED R. ULITZKA<sup>1</sup> & LAURENCE A. MOUND<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Thrips-iD*, Zeller Straße 14, 77654 Offenburg, Germany. E-mail: [manfred.ulitzka@thysanoptera.de](mailto:manfred.ulitzka@thysanoptera.de)

<sup>2</sup>CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences, PO Box 1700, Canberra, ACT 2601. E-mail: [laurence.mound@csiro.au](mailto:laurence.mound@csiro.au)

### Abstract

*Urothrips kobroi* sp. n. is described from Seychelles, and reasons are given for considering *Biconothrips* Stannard and *Coxothrips* Bournier as **new synonyms** of *Urothrips* Bagnall. This genus now includes nine species, distributed between Africa and Australia, and a key to these species is provided.

**Key words:** *Urothrips*, *Coxothrips*, *Biconothrips*, new species

### Introduction

This paper considers a group of fungus-feeding Phlaeothripinae species that live mainly in leaf litter, and are recorded across the Old World tropics from Africa to Australia. Generally wingless, they all have the anal setae and the tenth abdominal segment (the tube) unusually long, and they are generally referred to as the “urothripines”. The genus *Urothrips* was initially placed by Bagnall (1909) in its own Family, the Urothripidae, although subsequently (1912) he erected a third Thysanoptera Sub-Order, Polystigmata through misinterpreting the abdominal dorso-ventral muscle insertion points as “stigmata” (=spiracles). Priesner (1960) recognized this group as the subfamily Urothripinae, and Stannard (1971) referred to it as the Tribe Urothripini. However, subsequently Stannard (1957) indicated that the genera involved are closely related to the *Neurothrips* group of genera in the Phlaeothripinae, and referred to them as constituting the “*Amphibolothrips* line” rather than a discrete Tribe.

A total of 17 genera have been proposed within this group. However, particularly in the absence of any molecular data, generic classifications commonly involve arbitrary assessments of character state differences. Thus when species within a particular group are distinguished from each other on differences that are relatively difficult to see, then all the species will be placed into a single genus. But when the character differences are highly visible, it is likely that several genera will be recognised. Urothripine species often differ from each other in the degree of fusion of the antennal segments, such that the number of visible antennal segments ranges from eight down to four. Moreover, the morphological segments that are fused differ between species. Such highly visible differences in structure are reflected in the number of generic names proposed for species in this group. These patterns of variation amongst urothripines were discussed by Mound (1972), and one conclusion was that *Baenothrips* Crawford is a pantropical genus with four generic synonyms.

A further conclusion in Mound (1972) involving the classification of urothripines concerned dispersive behavior. Species in this group that live in leaf-litter or on dead twigs, and whose behavior involves crawling up above soil level, are likely to be wind dispersed. *Baenothrips mouni* Stannard is one such species, and this is widespread and structurally uniform across Australia. In contrast, *Biconothrips* adults do not crawl up grass stems or twigs, and seem to be relatively non-dispersive, with the result that there are often differences in structure or colour between localized populations. Previous workers on both *Trachythrips* in the Americas and *Urothrips* in Africa have interpreted such small differences as representing species. The definition of species among these wingless thrips requires further consideration, preferably using molecular data.

## References

- Bagnall, R.S. (1909) On *Urothrips paradoxus*, a new type of Thysanopterous insects. *Annales Historico-Naturales Musei Nationalis Hungarici*, 7, 125–136.
- Bagnall, R.S. (1912) Some considerations in regard to the classification of the Order Thysanoptera. *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (8), 10 (56), 220–222.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00222931208693221>
- Bhatti, J.S. (1998) New structural features in the Order Tubulifera (Insecta). 2. Thoracic structures. *Zoology (Journal of Pure and Applied Zoology)*, 5 (2), 177–252.
- Bournier, A. (1963) Thysanoptères de l'Angola II. *Publicações culturais da Companhia de Diamantes de Angola*, 63, 73–86.
- Faure, J.C. (1933) New genera and species of Thysanoptera from South Africa. *Bulletin of the Brooklyn Entomological Society*, 28, 1–20, 55–75.
- Kudo, I. (1989) Three Nepalese species of Urothripini, with a comment on terminology for prothoracic morphology (Thysanoptera: Phlaeothripidae). *Insecta Matsumurana*, 42, 83–91.
- Mound, L.A. (1972) Species complexes and the generic classification of leaf-litter thrips of the Tribe Urothripini (Phlaeothripidae). *Australian Journal of Zoology*, 20 (1), 83–103.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1071/zo9720083>
- Okajima, S. & Urushihara, H. (1995) Descriptions of four new urothripine species (Thysanoptera, Phlaeothripidae) from south east Asia. *Japanese Journal of Systematic Entomology*, 1, 27–34.
- Priesner, H. (1960) Das System der Tubulifera (Thysanoptera). *Anzeiger mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Klasse, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften 1960*, 13, 283–296.
- Stannard, L.J. (1957) The phylogeny and classification of the North American genera of the sub-order Tubulifera (Thysanoptera). *Illinois Biological Monographs*, 25, 1–200.
- Stannard, L.J. (1970) New genera and species of Urothripini (Thysanoptera: Phlaeothripidae). *Proceedings of the Royal entomological Society of London (B)*, 39, 114–124.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-3113.1970.tb00264.x>
- Trybom, F. (1913) Physapoden aus Natal und dem Zululande. *Arkiv fur Zoologi*, 7 (33), 1–52.