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A new species of the genus *Anthaxia* Eschscholtz, 1829 from southern Africa (Coleoptera: Buprestidae: Anthaxiini)

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Abstract

Anthaxia (Haplanthaxia) vlasta sp. nov. from the southern part of the Ethiopian Region (Malawi, Republic of South Africa, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe) is described and illustrated. Its isolated position among the Ethiopian species-groups is briefly discussed.

Key words: taxonomy, Coleoptera, Buprestidae, Anthaxiini, new species, Ethiopian Region

Introduction

The number of new species of the genus *Anthaxia* Eschscholtz, 1829 from the Ethiopian Region (Afrotropical Realm according to Holt et al, 2013) seems to be endless, particularly in the subgenus *Haplanthaxia* Reitter, 1911. In the course of my work revising the Ethiopian *Anthaxia* species-groups step by step (e.g. Bílý, 2010; Bílý & Kubáň, 2010; Bílý, 2014) I have often found an undescribed species which was impossible to attribute to any known (or proposed) species-group (e.g. Bílý, 2002). This is also the case of the new species described in this paper. Moreover it seems that a new definition of the subgenus *Haplanthaxia* and a new subgeneric arrangement of *Anthaxia* will be necessary in the near future.

Material and methods

A Canon D-550 digital camera with the Canon MP-E65 mm f/2.8 1-5× macro lens was used to capture the colour images of beetles.

Data from locality labels of the type specimens are cited "verbatim" with my comments in [square brackets], individual labels are indicated by a double slash ("/").

The pronotal length was measured at the middle, the width across the widest part; the elytral length was measured along the elytral suture (incl. scutellum) to the tips of elytra, elytral width was measured across humeri (incl. humeral swellings which in some cases project beyond the elytral outline).

Following codens are used in the text:

MKCN Marek Kafka coll. Neratovice, Czech Republic

MNPC National Museum, Prague, Czech Republic

Taxonomy

Anthaxia (Haplanthaxia) vlasta sp. nov.

(Figs. 1–3)

Type specimens studied. Holotype (male, NMPC): “Zimbabwe West, Victoria Falls, 5.xii.1996, lgt. P. Macháček”;

Elytra regularly convex, twice as long as wide, subparallel at anterior two thirds, regularly tapering posteriorly at apical third; posterior fourth of elytral margins very slightly, almost indistinctly serrate, each elytron rounded separately; humeral swellings small, not projecting beyond elytral outline; basal transverse depression wide and shallow, reaching scutellum; elytral epipleura relatively wide, parallel-sided, nearly reaching elytral apex; elytral sculpture very fine, consisting of small punctures on disc and fine, transverse rugae along lateral margins and at humeral part.

Ventral surface lustrous with fine (on abdominal ventrites very fine) ocellation; prosternal process flat, sharply pointed apically, strongly, abruptly enlarged posterior to procoxae; anal ventrite widely rounded, weakly truncate apically, without lateral serrations. Legs very slender, relatively long, both meso- and metatibiae almost straight; inner margin of metatibiae with several very small teeth at posterior third. Tarsal claws small, weakly hook-shaped, with basal tooth.

Aedeagus (Fig. 3) widely spindle-shaped, parameres conspicuously widened at midlength; median lobe pointed apically, without lateral serrations.

Sexual dimorphism. Female differs from male by the colouration (see above and Fig. 2), much deeper and wider lateroposterior pronotal depressions, narrowly rounded anal ventrite and by the simple metatibiae.

Measurements. Length: 3.5–4.2 mm (holotype 3.7 mm); width: 1.2–1.5 mm (holotype 1.4 mm).

Variability. Vertex: 1.8–2.3 times wider than width of eye; pronotum 1.6–1.7 times as wide as long; elytra 1.9–2.0 times as long as wide. The colouration of pronotum in 3 females varies from golden-red with darkened anterior third to almost red with blue-black triangle at anterior third.

Bionomy. Unknown.

Etymology. Noun in apposition; this species is dedicated to my wife Vlasta as my thanks for her whole-life help, support and patience.

Differential diagnosis. Among the Ethiopian species, *Anthaxia (Haplanthaxia) vlasta* sp. nov. somewhat resembles by its colouration females of *A. (H.) chlorophylla* Obenberger, 1928 (treated erroneously in the subgenus *Anthaxia* s. str. in Bílý (1997) and Bellamy (2008)) but it differs strongly from it by its very slightly convex frons, longer antennae, quite different pronotal sculpture and shape of elytra, form of male metatibiae, genitalia and tarsal claws. The shape of tarsal claws, with the relatively large basal tooth resembles tarsal claws of *A. (H.) gussmannae* Bílý, 2002 but this is the only similarity. *Anthaxia (H.) vlasta* sp. nov. differs from it by the large size, completely different sculpture of pronotum and elytra, colouration and by the different male metatibiae and genitalia (see Bílý, 2002). Tarsal claws with a basal tooth are a very unusual character in the Ethiopian *Anthaxia* and they were recorded only in *A. (H.) gussmannae*. Similar shaped tarsal claws in *Anthaxia* was observed only in the *A. (H.) collaris* Kerremans, 1893 species-group from south-eastern Asia (Bílý, 1995). By its lustrous body, bright orange pronotum and blue-green elytra it also resembles small specimens of the Palaearctic species *Anthaxia (H.) turcomanica* Obenberger, 1937 from Turkey.

Anthaxia (H.) vlasta sp. nov. is a rather isolated species and it is impossible to attribute it (at present) to any known Ethiopian species-group.

Distribution. Malawi, Republic of South Africa, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe.

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