

On the synonymy of *Deraeocoris brachialis* Stål with *D. olivaceus* F. (Heteroptera: Miridae)

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The synonymy of *D. brachialis* with *D. olivaceus* is re-confirmed.

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Kerzhner (1988) placed *Deraeocoris brachialis* (Stål, 1858) from Siberia and Far East in synonymy with *D. olivaceus* (Fabricius, 1777) from Europe based on intermediate characters of specimens from Eastern Europe formerly identified by A.N. Kiritschenko and other Russian authors as *D. brachialis*. Yasunaga & Nakatani (1998) restored *D. brachialis* as a separate species based mainly on differences between the examined specimens from Bulgaria and the Far East. Below, the main distinguishing characters indicated by these authors are given and opposed to observations on specimens from the collection of the Zoological Institute, St.Petersburg (ZIN).

According to Yasunaga & Nakatani (1998), *D. olivaceus* is smaller than *D. brachialis* (*D. olivaceus*: body length usually given in literature as 8.5-10.5 mm, in ♂/♀ from Bulgaria 9.90-10.68/ 10.02-10.20 mm; *D. brachialis*: ♂/♀ 10.42-12.90/ 10.02-12.20 mm). According to my measurements, the body length in ♀ from S Germany (Schwarzwald) is 8.5 mm, in ♂ from Yugoslavia (env. of Belgrade) 11.0 mm, in specimens from Byelorussia, Ukraine and European Russia ♂ (n = 7) 10.3-12.2, ♀ (n = 16) 9.9-12.3 mm, i. e. widely overlapping with that of *D. brachialis*. No clear pattern in change of size is found in E Europe: the smallest and the largest females are both from the middle Volga; the smallest male is from Bryansk and the largest one from E Ukraine; most specimens from E Europe are about 11 mm long.

Yasunaga & Nakatani (1998) stated that in *D. olivaceus* the antennal segment III is widely pale in basal part and infusate in apical part; in *D. brachialis*, it is dark brown, rarely pale at extreme base. According to my observations, this segment is yellow with narrowly dark apex in the ♀ from Germany and ♂ from Yugoslavia, but uniformly pale brown to dark brown, or with paler subbasal fourth or basal half in specimens from the European part of the former USSR.

Yasunaga & Nakatani pointed out small differences of *D. olivaceus* from *D. brachialis* in the structure of the left paramere and vesica. In these characters the specimen from Yugoslavia is similar to those from Bulgaria and specimens from E Europe to those from Siberia and the Far East.

Yasunaga & Nakatani (1998) noted that *D. olivaceus* lives on Rosaceae (*Malus*, *Crataegus*, *Pyrus*, *Prunus*), while *D. brachialis* on *Salix* and *Alnus*. It is true that the preferred plants are different in the western and eastern populations, but it is not an absolute difference: Kulik (1965) recorded as host plants in E Siberia also *Malus* and *Padus*, and several specimens from the Far East (Amur Prov., S Sakhalin) collected from *Malus* are found in the ZIN collection.

Examination of the ZIN collection shows that the distribution in the former USSR is continuous from Byelorussia and Ukraine to the Urals and then from Altai to the Far East. No records are known from the area between the Urals and Altai, but this area is very poorly investigated. The species is recorded here for the first time from Kazakhstan (Altai: Bukhtarma R.) and Mongolia (Hövsgöl and Hentiy aimaks).

Additional material from Western Europe is needed to clarify the geographic variability of *D. olivaceus* in detail and decide whether it is expedient to subdivide this species into two (or more) subspecies. For the present, taking into consideration the intermediate characters of the specimens from Eastern Europe, I consider subdivision of *D. olivaceus* into two species not substantiated.

References

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