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A New Synonym in the Tribe Blaptini (Coleoptera, Tenebrionidae)

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Abstract—Type specimen of *Platyscelis provostii* Fairmaire, 1888 has been examined and is re-described herein. The following new synonymy is established: *Platyscelis provostii* Fairmaire, 1888 = *Itagonia ganglbaueri* Schuster, 1914, syn. n.

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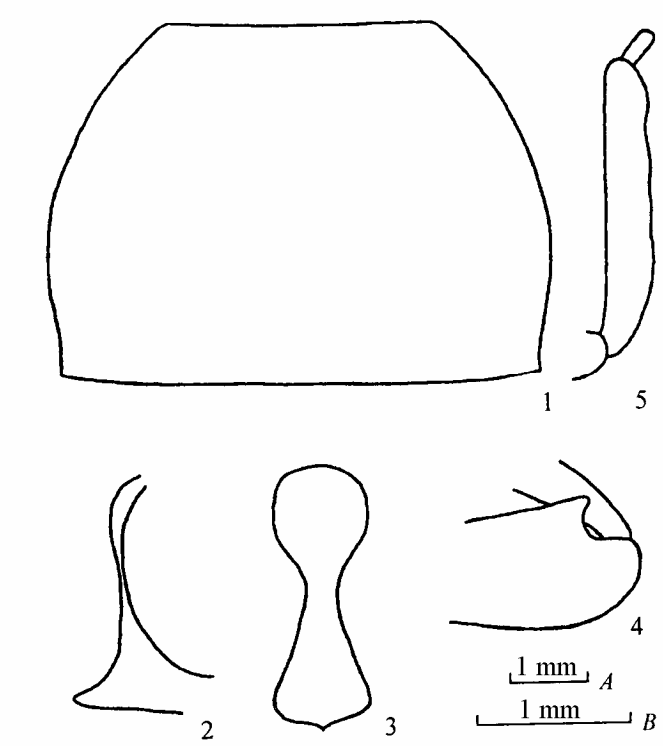
In 1888, *Platyscelis provostii* was described from Pekin [Beijing] vicinity (Fairmaire, 1888). The author gave a very short diagnosis of the new species: "*Platyscelis Provostii*.—Long. 15 mm.—Oblongo-ovata, valde convexa, nigra, nitida, capite dense strigosulo-punctato, prothorace parum transverso, antice angustiore, lateribus basi leviter rotundatis, dorso subtiliter, lateribus densius et rugosule punctato, elytris medio ampliatis, dense rugosulo-punctatis, femoribus anticis dente late trianguartis armatis." No character in the description clearly shows to which tribe the species belongs. Kaszab (1940) in his revision of the World fauna of the tribe Platyscelidini correctly noted that although he considered this taxon as *Oodescelis* Motsch. it may well belong to Blaptini, and wrote that the identity of *Platyscelis provostii* can be ascertained only after examination of the type in the Paris Museum which was not available to him. Type specimens of Blaptini and Platyscelidini described by Fairmaire have been subsequently examined by Koch (1965), but no data on *Platyscelis provostii* are reported in his paper. Probably, Koch could not locate the type. Egorov (2004) also points at an uncertain identity of *Platyscelis provostii*.

In July 2006, I have had an opportunity of examination of the type of *Platyscelis provostii* from Fairmaire collection in the Museum national d'Histoire naturelle, entomologie, Paris. It is a female with the following labels: (1) "99" (square): (2) "Pekin Provost" (Fairmaire's handwriting); (3) "TYPE" (red rectangle); (4) "MUSEUM PARIS, Collection Léon Fairmaire 1905;" (5) "*Platyscelis Provostii* ?Von (illegible) Pekin" (Fairmaire's handwriting).

Morphological investigation of the type specimen of *Platyscelis provostii* has shown its belonging to the genus *Itagonia* of the tribe Blaptini. Accordingly, I exclude *Platyscelis provostii* Fairmaire, 1888 from the tribe Platyscelidini and consider it *Itagonia provostii* (Fairmaire, 1888) of the Blaptini.

This is not the first case when a new species described in the Platyscelidini subsequently, upon a detailed investigation, was found to belong actually to the closely related Blaptini or to some remotely allied taxon. Reitter (1895, 1899) described two species as *Platyscelis hauseri*, and first of them is actually *Prosodes philacoides* (Fisch.) (Kaszab, 1940; Egorov, 2004). *Platyscelis labialis* F.-W. is actually a *Zabrus* Clairv., Carabidae (after Kraatz, 1882), and *Leipopleura gaditana* (Melichar, 1912) is a member of Chrysomelidae (after Kaszab, 1940). And, vice versa, in some publications at the end of the XIX century several species of Platyscelidini have been described in the tribes Blaptini and Helopini. For example, Fairmaire (1896) described in the genus *Tagonoides* Fairm. (Blaptini) two species, *T. zabriformis* and *T. sommerssmithi*, which subsequently were transferred to Platyscelidini. The former was placed first (Blair, 1923) in *Bioramix* Bat., and then (Kaszab, 1940; Koch, 1965) in *Platynoscelis* Kr.; *T. sommerssmithi* was included in *Platynoscelis* Kr. (Kaszab, 1940; Koch, 1965). In the modern classification of the Platyscelidini the both species are attributed to *Bioramix* Bat. (see Egorov, 2004). Reitter (1889) described *Helops subaeneus*, for which he erected later (Reitter, 1902) the genus *Euryhelops* (also in the subtribe Helopina), and it was only Kaszab (1940) who correctly placed this species in Platyscelidini where it is included now (Egorov, 2004) in *Bioramix*.

A comparison of *Itagonia provostii* with the congeners has shown its being morphologically identical



Figs. 1–5. *Itagonia provostii* (Fairm.), type specimen, female: (1) pronotum; (2) prosternal process, lateral view; (3) prosternal process, ventral view; (4) tooth of fore femur; (5) fore tibia. Scale: *A*, to Figs. 1, 4, 5; *B*, to Figs. 2, 3.

with *I. ganglbaueri* Schuster, 1914. In this connection, a new synonymy is proposed: *Platyscelis provostii* Fairmaire, 1888 = *Itagonia ganglbaueri* Schuster, 1914, **syn. n.** A description of the type specimen of *Platyscelis provostii* and principal bibliography of this taxon are given below.

Itagonia provostii (Fairmaire, 1888)

Fairmaire, 1888 : 201 (*Platyscelis*); Kaszab, 1940 : 987 (?*Oodescelis*); Egorov, 2004 : 596 (*Oodescelis*, species incertae sedis).—*ganglbaueri* Schuster, 1914, **syn. n.**

Incorrect spelling: *Platyscelis provosti*: Kaszab, 1940 : 987.

Description. Female. Head dorsally and pronotum weakly shining, elytra rather strongly shining. Pronotum and head almost black, labrum and elytra dark brown (dorsal surface of beetle black for naked eye). Elytra at magnification more than 16× dark brown with dense black maculae. Underside dark brown; four apical segments of antennae, pseudepipleura of elytra, tarsi, tibiae, and mouthparts (except mandibles) paler.

Head widest immediately behind eyes. Ratio of head width to distance between eyes 59 : 39. Labrum transverse, very shallowly emarginate. Punctation of labrum moderately dense, uneven, vanishing toward base of labrum and with transverse stripe of larger punctures at mid-length. Surface of labrum with rather long subrecumbent rufous yellow hairs more distinct at sides and lacking in short medial part of anterior margin. Temples first weakly diverging behind eyes, afterwards weakly roundly converging posteriad, not densely covered with anteriorly-pointed recumbent hairs. Surface of temples finely granulate. Genae narrow, with weakly emarginate and bare anterior edge; rest of genae densely punctate, covered with recumbent hairs. Contour of head above antennal insertions with shallow obtuse-angular emargination. Clypeus shallowly arcuately emarginate. Fronto-clypeal suture arcuate at sides and nearly straight in middle, not engraved, linear. Punctation coarser than that on labrum, mostly dense except for medioanterior area where punctures finer and sparser. Surface of clypeus and rest visible dorsally part of head bare, with obsolete longitudinal depression along sides. Posterior part of head covered with recumbent anteriorly-pointed hairs; punctation as on sides of clypeus, dense. Punctures at sides and at base elongate; at base, partly merging in short striae. Underside (postgenae and gula) strigose along midline. Eyes rather narrow, transverse, with

obsoletely emarginate anterior edges; in dorsal view not projecting from head contour. Apices of antennae not reaching pronotal base. First segment of antennae irregularly pear-shaped, with length to width ratio 20 : 15. Length to width ratio of 2nd–11th segments 12(11) : 30(11) : 15(11) : 15(10) : 14(10) : 14(13) : 14(15) :14(15) :14(15) : 21(15). Summarized lengths to widths of segments ratio (antennal index) 1.29. Pubescence on 1st–7th segments subrecumbent, sparse. 8–11th segments with dense recumbent yellow hairs and sparse erect sensilla. 2nd–4th segments subcylindrical, 5–7th weakly widening apically, 8–10th rounded, 11th broad irregular spindle-shaped, somewhat sharpened apically.

Pronotum transverse, twice as wide as head, 1.4 times as wide as long, widest behind middle; from widest point, more strongly narrowing toward apex than toward base, with sides slightly emarginate before posterior angles (Fig. 1). Ratio of apical width of pronotum to its maximum width and to width at base 65 : 120 : 110. Dorsal surface rather strongly convex in cross-section (more strongly so at apex than at base) and weakly convex longitudinally, noticeably depressed along sides, flattened at posterior corners. Apex in dorsal view obsoletely emarginate, nearly straight; base straight; anterior angles obtuse-angled, rounded at spices; posterior angles sharp, also obtuse-angled. The entire lateral margin and anterior angles finely edged, anterior and basal margins not edged. Lateral margin in lateral view weakly S-shaped. Punctation on disc finer than that on frons, sparse or moderately dense; that at sides coarser (similar to that on frons or coarser), dense; punctures on disc round, those at sides round or weakly elongate, partly merging by two or three in very short striae in lateral depressions and in flattened posterior corners. Punctures along basal margin fine and dense. Surface between punctures with fine, easily abraded isodiametric microsculpture more distinct on disc and with fine strokes. Propleura bare, deeply depressed along outer margin, more strongly so in basal half, so that sides of prothorax somewhat flattened dorsoventrally. Propleural sculpture consisting of rather coarse longitudinal rugae smoothened along lateral margins of propleura and of very sparse granules. Prosternum obtusely edged along anterior and posterior margins, and covered with fine, easily becoming lost hairs. Surface of prosternum not depressed anteriorly, almost vertically sloping to anterior margin, with irregular transverse wrinkles. Propleural suture S-curved. Coxal cavities rounded, situated at subequal distance from anterior and posterior margins of prothorax. Prosternal process with obsolete median depression, almost vertically sloping behind coxae and forming dentiform projection at the beginning of declivity (Fig. 2); projection covered with short erect hairs. In ventro-lateral view prosternal process sharply narrowing between coxae and then widening into the dentiform projection; latter somewhat wider than prosternal process in anterior part of coxae (Fig. 3). Ratio of prosternal process width in anterior part of coxae to maximum diameter of coxa 25 : 62. Mesosternum rather sparsely covered with subrecumbent hairs. Surface of mesosternum finely granulate in anterior part, finely longitudinally wrinkled at sides, gently sloping anteriad, shallowly depressed behind anterior margin. Mesosternal process wide, without lateral edging, emarginate posteriorly, depressed medially, with longitudinal sulci at apex. Junction between pro- and mesosternal processes situated at midlength of middle coxae. Middle coxae separated slightly less than hind coxae. Metasternum weakly wrinkled, with even surface and nearly straight posterior margin.

Elytra broad-oval, at base noticeably wider than pronotum, very weakly widening toward middle, thereafter roundly narrowing toward apex; latter attenuate in dorsal view. Length of elytra (measured in lateral view) 1.35 times their width; elytra 1.36 times as wide and 2.63 times as long as pronotum. Humeri pronounced, obtuse-angled, rounded. Punctation on average similar to that on pronotum, dense, finely rugulose at apex; interpunctural spaces with sparse transverse wrinkles, microsculpture not pronounced. Surface bare, rather strongly convex in cross-section and weakly convex longitudinally; sides and apical declivity very steep. Epipleura narrow, merging with lateral keel of elytra at their very apex. Lateral keel of elytra (outer margin of pseudepipleura) visible dorsally in anterior half and at apex, merging with epipleura not reaching sutural angle. Deflexed part of elytra weakly flattened, finely rugosely punctate.

Venter not flattened, bare. 1st–3rd visible sternites finely longitudinally wrinkled and punctate, 4th and 5th sternites with moderately dense punctation finer on 4th sternite. Forelast visible sternite with two oblique depressions at sides.

Legs moderately strong. Ratio of length(width) of fore, middle, and hind femora 75(32) : 93(23) : 115(25), that of corresponding tibiae 69(12) : 70(16) :

100(18), and tarsi 50(6) : 65(7) : 67(7). Fore femur sparsely punctate, with sparse recumbent hairs. Upper margin of inner face of fore femur with sharp acute-angled tooth (Fig. 4), apex of latter roundly blunted and somewhat curved downwards. Fore tibia curved at base, subparallel-sided along most of its length, widely rounded at outer and more narrowly rounded at inner apical angle (Fig. 5). Outer margin of fore tibia uneven. Inner face covered with sparse recumbent yellow hairs. Lower surface coarsely granulate, more strongly so at outer margin, covered with sparse setae and subrecumbent hairs. Apical margin of tibia with uniform row of short dense setae. Inner apical spur of fore tibia considerably larger than outer spur, finger-shaped, with ventral surface somewhat depressed. Fore tarsus not dilated, with sparse recumbent hairs dorsally. Ratio of length (width) of 1st–5th segments of fore tarsus 15(12) : 13(10) : 13(10) : 15(10) : 37(12). 1st segment in dorsal view curved, its ventral surface with yellow-brown hair brush, occupying apical third of segment. 2nd–4th segments covered ventrally with subrecumbent setae, 5th segment with subrecumbent hairs. Vestiture and punctation of middle femur similar to those of fore femur. Middle tibia weakly curved at base, then weakly widening apicad, almost uniformly dressed with sparse subrecumbent rufous setae and hairs. Apical margin of tibia with uniform row of stout setae missing on part of inner arch of apical margin. Spurs dissimilar, inner spur about 1.5 times as long as outer one, both rather widely rounded apically. Widths of spurs equal, slightly less than half as wide as inner spur of fore tibia. Tarsal segments without sole brushes, otherwise pubescence as that of fore tarsus. Ratio of length (width) of 1st–5th segments 28(11) : 20(10) : 21(10) : 20(9) : 39(12). Hind femur with punctation and pubescence as those of fore and middle femora. Hind tibia straight, weakly widening apicad, with vestiture similar to that of middle tibia. Apical margin of tibia with uniform row of stout setae. Spurs dissimilar: inner spur longer and wider than outer one, latter parallel-sided, former widening apicad, both more than half as wide as inner spur of fore tibia. Ratio of length (width) of 1st–4th segments of hind tarsus 43(15) : 25(13) : 25(12) : 45(14). Pubescence of hind tarsus similar to that of middle tarsus. Claws in all tarsi evenly and weakly curved. Onychium in all tarsi widely rounded.

Body length ca. 15 mm, width 7.9 mm.

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