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NOTE

FIRST REPORT OF DARKLING BEETLE *BLAPS ORIENTALIS* SOLIER, 1848 (COLEOPTERA: TENEBRIONIDAE) FROM INDIA

V.D. Hegde, D. Vasanthakumar & S.V. Manthen

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FIRST REPORT OF DARKLING BEETLE *BLAPS ORIENTALIS* SOLIER, 1848 (COLEOPTERA: TENEBRIONIDAE) FROM INDIA

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The darkling beetles belonging to the tribe Blaptini Leach, 1815 are large, oblong-elongate beetles, usually measuring more than 20mm in length (Aalbu et al. 2002). This tribe consists of 500 species under 28 genera worldwide (Medvedev 2001, 2007; Medvedev & Merkl 2002), which includes 23 species of six genera from India (unpublished data). The genus *Blaps* Fabricius, 1775 is one of the most diverse genera of darkling beetles in this tribe (Soldati et al. 2017). The species belonging to this genus are generally flightless and well adapted to semi-arid and arid conditions owing to several specific behavioural and morphological adaptations (Condamine et al. 2011). This genus includes more than 250 species worldwide (Löbl et al. 2008), 15 of which were reported from India. The details and distribution of all *Blaps* species earlier reported from northern and northeastern India are given in Table 1. The first report of *B. orientalis* Solier, 1848 from India after its earlier report from Bela in Balochistan (earlier Belutschistan), Pakistan (Schuster 1930), is provided here. Interestingly, this collection from Pune in Maharashtra shows the distribution of

Blaps species from peninsular India for the first time.

Systematic Account (As per Bouchard et al. 2005)

Family: Tenebrionidae Latreille, 1802

Subfamily: Tenebrioninae Latreille, 1802

Tribe: Blaptini Leach, 1815

Subtribe: Blaptina Leach, 1815

Genus: *Blaps* Fabricius, 1775

Species: *orientalis* Solier, 1848

Material examined: Ent-1/56A/162, 1 ex., male, 07.vii.1961, National Chemical Laboratory campus, Pune (18054156 N & 73081155 E altitude 594m), Maharashtra, India, coll. S.M. Ketkar.

Diagnostic characters: Body black, length 38mm, width 17mm, elongate-oval (Image 1A); head widest at eye level; antennae medium size, reaching close to the base of pronotum when directed backwards and apical antennomeres bearing only simple setiform sensoria; punctuation of head not coarse, moderately dense.

Pronotum longer than wide, transverse, convex, narrowed backward and arched towards the base; sparsely and smoothly punctated. Pronotum 1.9 times as wide as head; anterior margin rounded, lateral margin rounded in anterior half and straight in basal half; basal margin truncate, closely embracing and overlapping basal aspect of elytra.

Elytra elongate (1.9 times as long as wide), with epipleura narrow throughout its length, broadest around its middle; 2.5 times as long and 1.3 times as wide as



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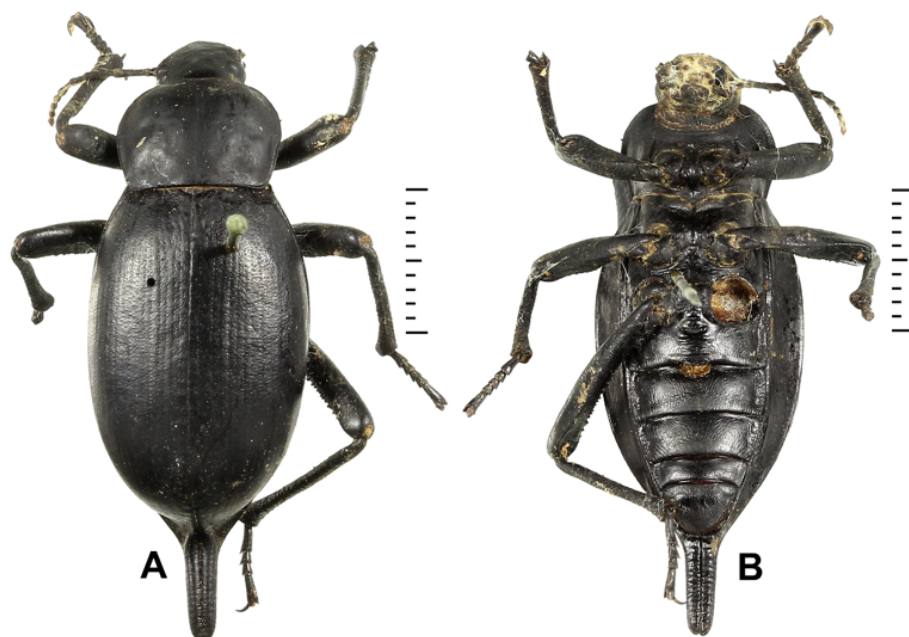


Image 1. Full habitus of *Blaps orientalis*. A - dorsal view, B - ventral view

Table 1. List of all *Blaps* species reported from India

Species	Distribution
<i>Blaps apicecostata</i> Blair, 1922	Sikkim
<i>B. breiti</i> Reitter, 1913	Himachal Pradesh
<i>B. crassicornis</i> (Fairmaire, 1891)	Jammu & Kashmir
<i>B. gentilis</i> Fairmaire, 1887	The northern part of India
<i>B. himalyaica</i> Blair, 1923	Sikkim
<i>B. indicola</i> Bates, 1879	Jammu & Kashmir
<i>B. marginicollis</i> (Fairmaire, 1891)	Jammu & Kashmir
<i>B. moerens</i> Allard, 1880	Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh
<i>B. nadaii</i> Medvedev, 2004	Uttarakhand
<i>B. nathani</i> Kulzer, 1956	Rajasthan
<i>B. perlonga</i> F. Bates, 1879	Jammu & Kashmir
<i>B. socia</i> Seidlitz, 1898	Uttarakhand and Sikkim
<i>B. srinagaricus</i> Kaszab, 1975	Jammu & Kashmir
<i>B. tristicia</i> Bogatchev, 1949	Jammu & Kashmir
<i>B. urophora</i> Fairmaire, 1891	Jammu & Kashmir

pronotum, 2.7 times as wide as head; elytra 3.9 times as long as mucro; mucro narrow and elongate. Length of caudal extension at the apex of elytra (mucro) is 6.26mm. Abdomen wrinkled and presence of punctures in fourth and fifth abdominal ventrites between irregular wrinkles. Presence of hair brush between first and second abdominal ventrites (Image 1B).

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Articles

Dietary preference and feeding patterns of the urban Rhesus Macaque *Macaca mulatta* (Mammalia: Primates: Cercopithecidae) in Asola-Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary in India

-- Ishita Ganguly & Netrapal Singh Chauhan, Pp. 12907–12915

Postembryonic development of the Tri-spine Horseshoe Crab *Tachypleus tridentatus* (Merostomata: Xiphosura) in a nursery habitat in the Philippines

-- Dorkas Kaiser & Sabine Schoppe, Pp. 12916–12932

Communications

Copulatory behavior of the Jaguar *Panthera onca* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Felidae)

-- Pedro Nacib Jorge-Neto, Cristiane Schilbach Pizzutto, Gediendson Ribeiro de Araujo, Thyara de Deco-Souza, Leanes Cruz da Silva, Jorge Aparecido Salomão Jr. & Hernan Baldassare, Pp. 12933–12939

Amphibians of the Dibang River Basin, Arunachal Pradesh: an annotated checklist with distribution records

-- Jayanta K. Roy, Ramie H. Begum & M. Firoz Ahmed, Pp. 12940–12952

Taxonomic studies on the gaudy grasshoppers (Orthoptera: Pyrgomorphae: Pyrgomorphidae) from the northeastern states of India

-- M. Imran Khan, M. Kamil Usmani, Shahnaila Usmani & Hira Naz, Pp. 12953–12968

Odonata (Insecta) diversity of Kuldih Wildlife Sanctuary and its adjoining areas, Odisha, eastern India

-- Subrat Debata & Kedar Kumar Swain, Pp. 12969–12978

Short Communications

On the diversity of the vertebrate fauna (excluding fishes) of Panchet Hill (Garh Panchkot), Purulia, West Bengal, India

-- Sanjib Chattopadhyay, Somenath Dey & Utpal Singha Roy, 12979–12985

First record of the rare Furry Lobster *Palinurellus wieneckii* (De Man, 1881) (Decapoda: Palinuridae) from the Arabian Sea

-- K.K. Idreesbabu, C.P. Rajool Shanis & S. Sureshkumar, Pp. 12986–12989

Description of life stages of dung beetle *Scaptodera rhammistus* (Fabricius, 1775) (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Scarabaeinae) with notes on nesting and biology

-- Suvarna S. Khadakkar, Ashish D. Tiple & Arun M. Khurad, Pp. 12990–12994

An updated list of Odonata of southwestern Bangladesh

-- M. Sajjad Hossain Tuhin & M. Kawsar Khan, Pp. 12995–13001

On the reproductive biology of *Salacia fruticosa* Wall. ex M.A. Lawson

- an endemic medicinal plant of the Western Ghats, India

-- K. Subin, P.A. Jose & T.V. Sarath, Pp. 13002–13005

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Contribution to the Macromycetes of West Bengal, India: 28–33

-- Rituparna Saha, Arun Kumar Dutta, Soumitra Paloi, Anirban Roy & Krishnendu Acharya, Pp. 13006–13013

Notes

The identification of Takin *Budorcas taxicolor* (Mammalia: Bovidae) through dorsal guard hair

-- Manokaran Kamalakannan, Pp. 13014–13016

Photographic evidence of Striped Hyena *Hyaena hyaena* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Hyaenidae) in Ramnagar forest division, Uttarakhand, India

-- Vipul Maurya, Jai Pratap Singh, Kahkashan Naseem, Surender Mehra, Parag M. Dhakate, Neha Verma & A.G. Ansari, Pp. 13017–13019

Range extension of the Least Leaf-nosed Bat *Hipposideros cineraceus* Blyth, 1853 (Mammalia: Chiroptera: Hipposideridae): to central India

-- M. Kamalakannan, C. Venkatraman, Tauseef Hamid Dar & Kailash Chandra, Pp. 13020–13023

A report on the possible interbreeding between Grizzled Giant Squirrel *Ratufa macroura* and Indian Giant Squirrel *Ratufa indica* from Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary in the southern Western Ghats, India

-- Kiran Thomas, D.K. Vinodkumar, Jomals Mathews John, M. Shaji & P.O. Nameer, Pp. 13024–13028

***Ischnura fountaineae* (Insecta: Odonata: Zygoptera) in Oman, eastern Arabia**

-- Elaine Mary Cowan & Peter John Cowan, Pp. 13029–13031

First record of *Leptogenys hystericica* Forel, 1900 (Hymenoptera: Formicidae: Ponerinae) from Pakistan

-- Muhammad Tariq Rasheed, Imran Bodlah, Ammara Gull e Fareen & Xiaolei Huang, Pp. 13032–13036

First report of darkling beetle *Blaps orientalis* Solier, 1848 (Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae) from India

-- V.D. Hegde, D. Vasanthakumar & S.V. Manthen, Pp. 13037–13038

Notes on the occurrence of orchids *Bulbophyllum medioximum*, *Herminium edgeworthii* and *H. macrophyllum* (Orchidaceae) in Arunachal Pradesh, India

-- Krishna Chowlu, Avishek Bhattacharjee & Pankaj Kumar, Pp. 13039–13043

Lectotypification of two names in the genus *Gymnostachyum* (Acanthaceae)

-- M.C. Shameer & V.K. Sreenivas, Pp. 13044–13045

Miscellaneous

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