

Linzer biol. Beitr.	54/2	403–406	Februar 2023
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On the taxonomy and zoogeography of the Caucasian genus *Pseudotyphlopasilia* (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Aleocharinae). V. A new species and additional records from Georgia

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A b s t r a c t : *Pseudotyphlopasilia pertinax* nov.sp. (Georgia: Kvemo Svaneti: Lechakhumi Range) is described, illustrated, and distinguished from similar congeners. Additional records of *P. kakhetica* ASSING, 2021 are reported. The genus now includes 13 species, twelve of them locally endemic in Georgia and one in the Russian part of the West Caucasus:

K e y w o r d s : Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Aleocharinae, *Pseudotyphlopasilia*, Palearctic region, Caucasus, Georgia, taxonomy, new species, new records.

Introduction

The aleocharine genus *Pseudotyphlopasilia* PACE, 1983 previously included twelve species distributed in the Caucasus region, eleven of them in Georgia and one in the Russian part of the West Caucasus. All of them are anophthalmous, micropterous, and locally endemic (ASSING 2021, 2022).

During a field trip to Northwest Georgia in summer 2021, a female was collected by soil-washing in a locality to the east of Lentekhi (Georgia: Kvemo Svaneti). The spermatheca looked different from those of other species, but a description of a new species based on a single female seemed inappropriate and inadequate. In summer 2022, another field trip was conducted and the locality was revisited with the aim of collecting more specimens. Despite extensive sampling and soil-washing, only one specimen without forebody was found in the soil extractors. Fortunately, the abdomen proved to be that of a male, and an examination of the aedeagus confirmed that the species was in fact undescribed.

In addition to the description of the above species, new records of *Pseudotyphlopasilia kakhetica* ASSING, 2021 are provided from Northeast Georgia.

Material and methods

The material treated in this paper is deposited in the following collections:

MNB.....Museum für Naturkunde, Berlin (coll. Schülke)

cAss.....author's private collection

The morphological studies were conducted using Stemi SV 11 (Zeiss) and Discovery V12 (Zeiss) microscopes, and a Jenalab compound microscope (Carl Zeiss Jena). The

images were created using digital cameras (Axiocam ERc 5s, Nikon Coolpix 995), as well as Labscope and Picolay software.

Body length was measured from the anterior margin of the labrum to the posterior margin of tergite VIII, the length of the forebody from the anterior margin of the labrum to the posterior margin of the elytra, head length from the anterior margin of the clypeus to the posterior constriction of the head, elytral length at the suture from the apex of the scutellum to the posterior margin of the elytra, and the length of the aedeagus from the apex of the ventral process to the base of the aedeagal capsule. The "parameral" side (i.e., the side where the sperm duct enters) is referred to as the ventral, the opposite side as the dorsal aspect.

Results

Pseudotyphlopasilia kakhetica ASSING, 2021

Material examined: **GEORGIA:** **Kakheti:** 5♂♂, 7♀♀, NNE Akhmeta, N Birkiani, 42°15'23"N, 45°20'11"E, 880 m, river valley with mixed deciduous forest, moist litter sifted, 25.VII.2022, leg. Assing (cAss); 1♂, 4♀♀, same data, but litter and soil around old trunk sifted (cAss); 4♀♀, NNE Akhmeta, N Birkiani, 42°14'09"N, 45°19'53"E, 830 m, river valley with mixed deciduous forest, litter sifted, 25.VII.2022, leg. Assing (cAss); 2♂♂, N Birkiani, 42°13'07"N, 45°18'40"E, 760 m, mixed forest margin, moist litter and soil near small stream sifted, 27.VII.2022, leg. Assing (cAss); 13♂♂, 34♀♀, N Lechuri, 42°10'22"N, 45°25'52"E, forest margin near road margin, 620 m, litter sifted, 28.VII.2022, leg. Assing (cAss); 1♂, 1♀, NE Telavi, NE Lapankuri, 42°06'26"N, 45°38'53"E, 830 m, forest margin near road, litter sifted, 29.VII.2022, leg. Assing (cAss); 2♂♂, 4♀♀, NE Telavi, NE Lapankuri, 42°06'12"N, 45°38'44"E, 800 m, stream valley with deciduous forest, litter sifted, 29.VII.2022, leg. Assing (cAss).

The original description of this species is based on 21 type specimens from four localities to the north of Birkiani and Lechuri. Remarkably, unlike other species of the genus, which are generally collected in small numbers and primarily by soil-washing, *P. kakhetica* was found in rather large numbers by sifting leaf litter. Additional material from most of the above localities is deposited in MNB (leg. M. Schülke).

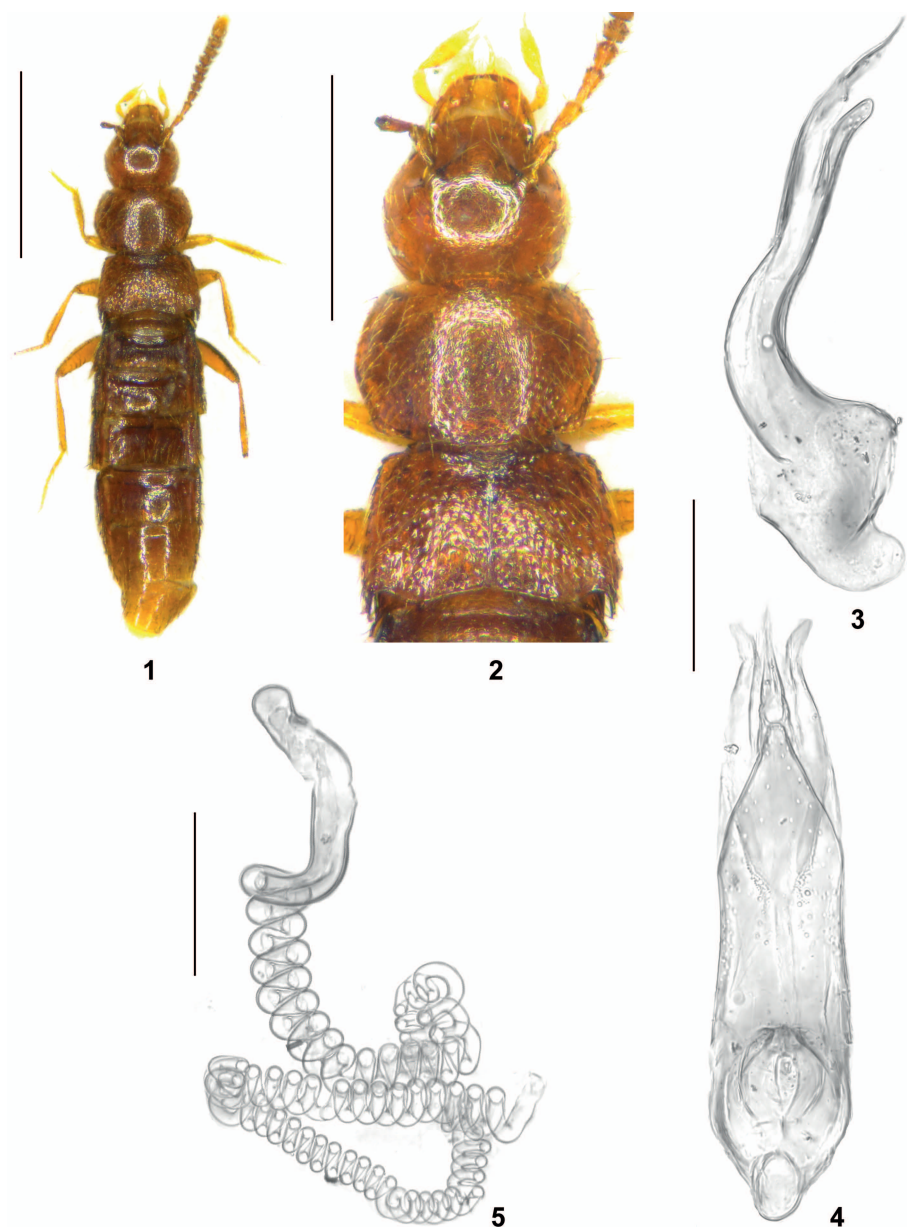
Pseudotyphlopasilia pertinax nov.sp. (Figs 1-5)

Type material: **Holotype** ♀: "GEORGIA [27] – Kvemo Svaneti, E Lentekhi, S Panaga, 42°49'46"N, 42°55'09"E, 1160 m, 1.VIII.2021, V. Assing / Holotypus ♂ *Pseudotyphlopasilia pertinax* sp. n., det. V. Assing 2022" (cAss). **Paratype** ♂ [forebody missing]: "GEORGIA[77a]– Kvemo Svaneti, E Lentekhi, S Panaga, 42°49'46"N 42°55'09"E, 1160 m, 10.VIII.2022, V. Assing" (cAss).

Etymology: The specific epithet (Latin adjective: tenacious) alludes to the efforts required to collect the above two type specimens.

Description: Body length 2.9 mm; length of forebody 1.1 mm. Habitus as in Fig. 1. Colouration: body reddish, with the abdominal apex yellow; legs yellow; antennae reddish.

Head (Fig. 2) transverse and somewhat wedge-shaped; punctation extremely fine, visible in the distinct microreticulation only at high magnification (100 x).



Figs 1-5: *Pseudotyphlopasilia pertinax*: (1) habitus; (2) forebody; (3-4) median lobe of aedeagus in lateral and in ventral view; (5) spermatheca. Scale bars: 1: 1.0 mm; 2: 0.5 mm; 3-5: 0.1 mm.

Pronotum (Fig. 2) 1.4 times as broad as long, broadest approximately in the middle, and 1.3 times as broad as head, posterior angles marked; punctation moderately dense and fine, but more distinct than that of head; interstices with distinct microreticulation.

Elytra (Fig. 7) 0.68 times as long as pronotum; punctation moderately dense and somewhat asperate; interstices without microsculpture. Hind wings completely reduced.

Abdomen: tergites III–V with anterior impressions; punctation fine and moderately dense on anterior tergites, decreasing in density towards posterior tergites, rather sparse on tergite VII; interstices with microreticulation composed of transverse meshes; posterior margin of tergite VII without palisade fringe; tergite VIII without sexual dimorphism, posterior margin weakly convex.

♂: sternite VIII with triangularly produced posterior margin; median lobe of aedeagus (Figs 3–4) 0.29 mm long; ventral process distinctly sinuate in lateral view; internal sac with short flagellum.

♀: posterior margin of sternite VIII strongly convex; spermatheca (Fig. 5) with very long proximal portion forming numerous coils.

Comparative notes: Regarding the shape of the aedeagus, *P. pertinax* is most similar to *P. egrisica* ASSING, 2022 from the Egrisi Range, from which it is distinguished by a basally strongly produced median lobe of the aedeagus (lateral view) and by a significantly longer proximal portion of the spermatheca. For illustrations of *P. egrisica* and other species of the genus see ASSING (2021, 2022).

Distribution and natural history: The type locality is situated to the south of Panaga at the base of the southern slope of the Lechakhumi Range, to the east of Lentekhi. The specimens were collected by soil-washing on a slope with deciduous forest at an altitude of 1160 m.

Zusammenfassung

Pseudotiphlopasilia pertinax nov.sp. (Georgien: Kvemo Svaneti: Lechakhumi Range) wird beschrieben, abgebildet und von ähnlichen Arten der Gattung unterschieden. Weitere Nachweise von *P. kakhetica* ASSING, 2021 werden gemeldet. Die Gattung enthält derzeit 13 Arten, von denen zwölf in Georgien und eine im russischen Teil des Westkaukasus lokalendemisch sind.

References

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Zeitschrift/Journal: [Linzer biologische Beiträge](#)

Jahr/Year: 2023

Band/Volume: [0054_2](#)

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Artikel/Article: [On the taxonomy and zoogeography of the Caucasian genus *Pseudotyphlopasilia* \(Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Aleocharinae\). V. A new species and additional records from Georgia 403-406](#)