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A new species of *Microlestodes* Baehr from Western Australia

(Insecta, Coleoptera, Carabidae, Lebiinae)

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Microlestodes occidentalis, spec. nov. is described from Millstream, Western Australia. Presumably, this species is next related to *M. flavicornis* Baehr, and it is the western vicariant of that northeastern species.

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During a visit to the Australian National Insect Collection, Canberra in 1987, I found a single specimen of *Microlestodes* from Western Australia I was unable to identify immediately. So I took the specimen along with me for more detailed examination and found it to represent a new species which is described below.

Measurements

Method of measurements is the same as in my revision of this genus (Baehr 1987 a).

Microlestodes occidentalis, spec. nov. (Figs 1, 2)

Holotype: ♂, Millstream, Western Australia, mouth of Dawson's Ck., 21°35'S, 117°04'E, 7. XI. 1970, at light, E. B. Britton (Australian National Insect Collection, Canberra).

Diagnosis. Small, piceous species with vaguely lighter base of elytra and completely yellow antennae, best recognized by convex aedeagus with very short, knob-like apex and one sclerotized tooth at bottom of orificium.

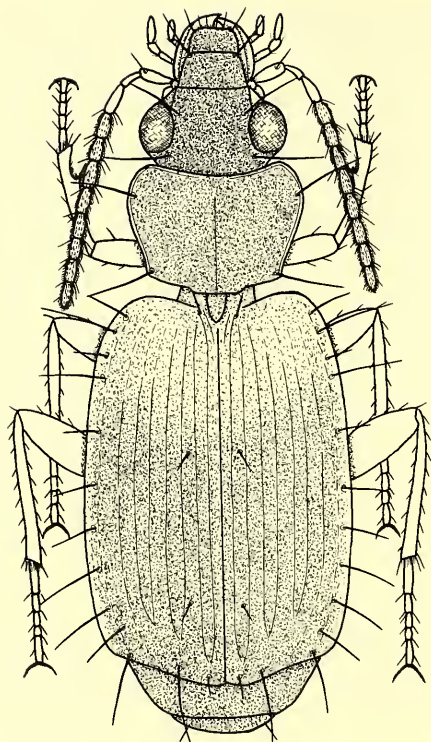
Description

Measurements. Length: 3.2 mm; width: 1.35 mm; ratio width/length of pronotum: 1.35; ratio widest part/base of pronotum: 1.21; ratio length/width of elytra: 1.44.

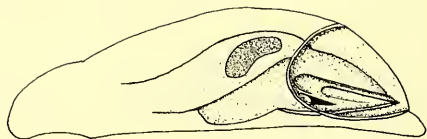
Colour. Head piceous-blackish, pronotum and elytra piceous, basal third of elytra slightly lighter, though very ill defined. Borders of pronotum and of elytra obscurely lighter. Surface of elytra strongly iridescent. Ventral surface piceous. Antennae, mouthparts, and legs completely yellow.

Head. Of average size. Eyes large, protruding, though orbits rather large, oblique. Antennae medium sized. Surface finely microreticulate with irregular, elongate meshes, but almost impunctate.

Pronotum. Rather wide, slightly heart-shaped, distinctly wider than head. Base comparatively wide. Anterior angles produced, though completely rounded off, apex excised, in middle slightly con-



1



2

Figs 1 & 2. *Microlestodes occidentalis*, spec. nov. 1. Holotype, length: 3.2 mm. 2. ♂ aedeagus.

vex. Lateral borders convex, slightly sinuate in front of the obtuse posterior angles. Median lobe of base wide, moderately produced. Lateral parts of base slightly oblique, near posterior angles rather advanced. Median line superficial, anteriorly abbreviated. Surface with very fine, transverse meshes and lines, and with fine, scattered punctures, though middle rather smooth.

Elytra. Wide, depressed, widest at posterior third. Shoulders evenly rounded, lateral borders almost straight, though slightly divergent. Apex slightly oblique, with shallow sinuosity. Striae superficial, feebly punctate. Intervals depressed. Punctures on 3rd interval inconspicuous. Humeral group of marginal punctures consisting of 5, apical group of 8 pores, both groups not interrupted. Microsculpture of surface irregular, fine, consisting of transverse meshes and lines, and of very fine, scattered punctures. Surface strongly iridescent. Winged.

Lower surface. Metepisternum fairly elongate, median border about twice as long as anterior border. Last abdominal sternite of ♂ slightly excised in middle, bisetose.

Legs. 1rd–3rd segments of ♂ anterior tarsus slightly widened, clothed with two rows of adhesive hairs.

♂ aedeagus. Rather compact, upper surface convex, lower surface slightly concave. Apex very short, blunt. Orificium turned to left side, ventrally with one sclerotized tooth.

♀. Not known.

Variation. Not known.

Distribution. Known only from type locality in Hamersley Range area, Western Australia.

Material examined (1). Only the holotype.

Recognition

In my key to the Australian-New Guinean species of *Microlestodes* (Baehr 1987 a) *M. occidentalis*, spec. nov. would key out under couplet 6 –, together with *M. flavicornis* Baehr. It can be distinguished by shape of aedeagus which is not depressed on upper surface in front of orificium nor bisinuate on ventral surface.

Relationships

Although the aedeagus of *M. occidentalis*, spec. nov. is very similar to that of *M. rufoniger* Baehr of north-western Australia, differing only by its yet shorter apex, both species are not very closely related which is demonstrated by pattern, shape of pronotum, and much more protruding eyes without distinct orbits in *M. rufoniger*. Actually, *M. occidentalis* is perhaps next related to *M. flavicornis* Baehr from north-eastern and far northern Australia. Both species are superficially very similar, apart from the lighter base of elytra in *M. occidentalis*. However, they are well distinguished by the different shape of their ♂ aedeagi.

Most probably *M. occidentalis*, spec. nov. is the western vicariant of eastern *M. flavicornis* Baehr, having evolved in the notorious refugial area of the “river oasis” of Millstream at the northern rim of Hamersley Ranges. However, more material is needed to know the real distribution of this species, especially whether it is distributed also in the valleys of the Hamersley Ranges, as usual in several species of different carabid groups known from Millstream (Baehr 1987b, c).

Acknowledgements

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