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A new species of *Peschetius* GUIGNOT described from Sri Lanka (Coleoptera: Dytiscidae)

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Abstract

Peschetius taprobanicus sp.n. (Coleoptera: Dytiscidae) is described on the basis of six specimens collected from Sri Lanka. Distinguishing characters are given for the new species.

Key words: Coleoptera, Dytiscidae, *Peschetius taprobanicus*, new species, Sri Lanka.

The genus *Peschetius* GUIGNOT was revised by BISTRÖM & NILSSON (2003). Nine valid species were recognized, seven of which occur in the Ethiopian Region and two in the Oriental Region. At the time of the revision, the genus *Peschetius* was associated with the tribe Hydroporini. Soon after that, the detection of a key-character in the female genitalia in *Peschetius* resulted in a transfer of the genus to the tribe Bidessini (MILLER et al. 2006). Since 2003 no new species of *Peschetius* have been described (NILSSON 2015). Accordingly, the new species described herein raises the number of species of *Peschetius* to ten, and enlarges the distribution to include also Sri Lanka.

The new species was found among unsorted specimens kept in the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm, Sweden. They had been collected by the late Swedish entomologist Tor-Erik Leiler, whose large collection was donated to the museum in 1997. All examined specimens are databased available through the web portal for natural history collections in Sweden at www.naturarv.se.

Peschetius taprobanicus sp.n.

TYPE LOCALITY: Sri Lanka, Polonnaruwa, 7.93°N, 81.01°E.

TYPE MATERIAL: **Holotype** ♂: “Sri Lanka Polonnaruwa [sic] 1985.11.20 T.-E. Leiler” (museum catalogue number: “NHRS-JLBK000023270”). **Paratypes**: five females with same label text as holotype (museum catalogue numbers: “NHRS-JLBK000023271-75”). The holotype and three paratypes are kept in the Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm, and two paratypes are kept in the Finnish Museum of Natural History, Helsinki, Finland.

DIAGNOSIS: The new species is closely related to *Peschetius toxophorus* GUIGNOT, 1942, recorded from most parts of India (GHOSH & NILSSON 2012). The two species can be separated by the head, which is almost totally black in *P. toxophorus*, while it is pale ferrugineous to ferrugineous and blackish only narrowly along the margins of the eyes in *P. taprobanicus*. Diagnostic characters of the male genitalia appear as follows: penis of *P. taprobanicus* longer, more slender and extreme apex distinctly curved upwards. Moreover, the dense setal tuft on the paramere is concentrated toward the apex and not along the apical half of the paramere as in *P. toxophorus*.

Body comparatively broad; lateral outline quite rounded. Length of body 2.96–3.04 mm, width 1.56–1.60 mm. Color pattern of elytra distinct (Fig. 1a).

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DESCRIPTION: Head almost totally pale ferrugineous; at eyes narrowly blackish. Punctures on head medium coarse and quite dense; slightly indistinct due to distinct microsculpture. Frontally, on head punctures become weakly developed and in part indistinct. Posteriorly at pronotum, head narrowly punctate (Fig. 1b). Mat to submat due to dense microsculpture. Frontally, head provided with two shallow depressions. Antenna pale ferrugineous, slender.

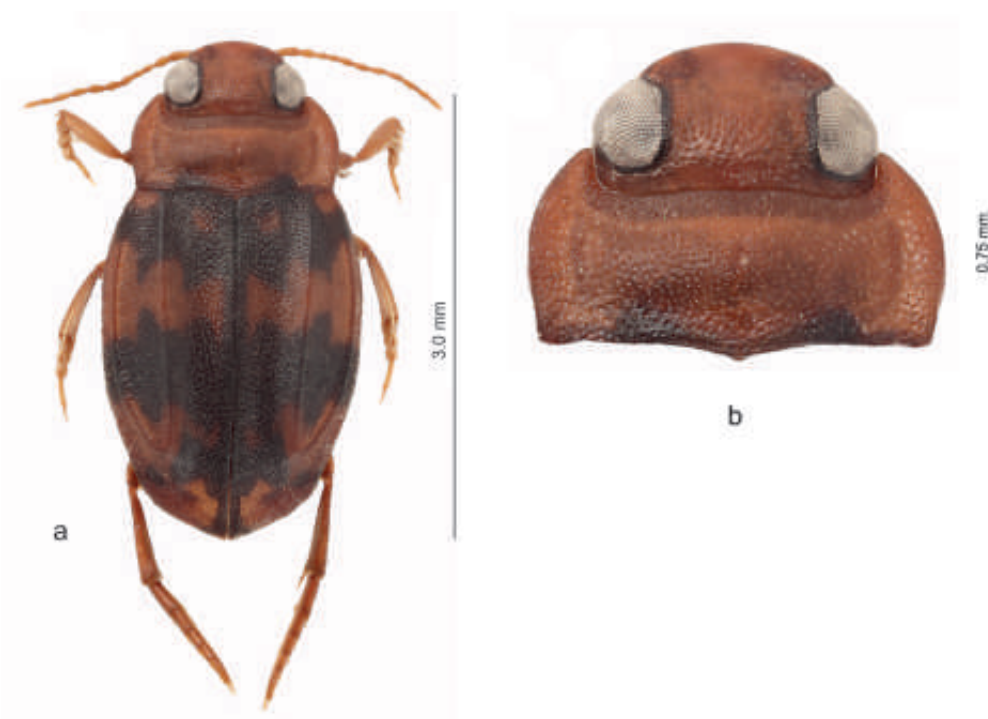


Fig. 1: *Peschetius taprobanicus*, a) habitus, b) head and pronotum.

Pronotum: Ferrugineous to pale ferrugineous, at base with two blackish spots. Frontally, along foremargin, with a vague, slightly darker marking (Fig. 1b). Lateral outline almost evenly rounded. At base with a distinct transverse depression. Laterally with a shallow sublateral depression, which disappears anteriorly. Punctures moderately coarse to coarse, quite dense and quite evenly distributed. Pronotum densely microsculptured and mat.

Elytra: Ferrugineous to pale ferrugineous, with blackish color pattern (Fig. 1a). Elytral keels distinct (Fig. 1a). Punctures moderately coarse and dense, quite evenly distributed. Mat to submat, densely microsculptured.

Ventral aspect: Pale ferrugineous to ferrugineous, no distinct color pattern. Submat to mat, densely microsculptured. Punctures coarse to moderately coarse, quite dense, irregularly distributed. Prosternal process not transversely depressed, quite broad, apex-end quite abrupt; not distinctly keeled (Fig. 2e). Area interior to metacoxal lines strongly impressed. Basal segments of abdomen distinctly keeled medially, provided with basal shallow depression, and a number of extensive but shallow punctures (Fig. 2d).

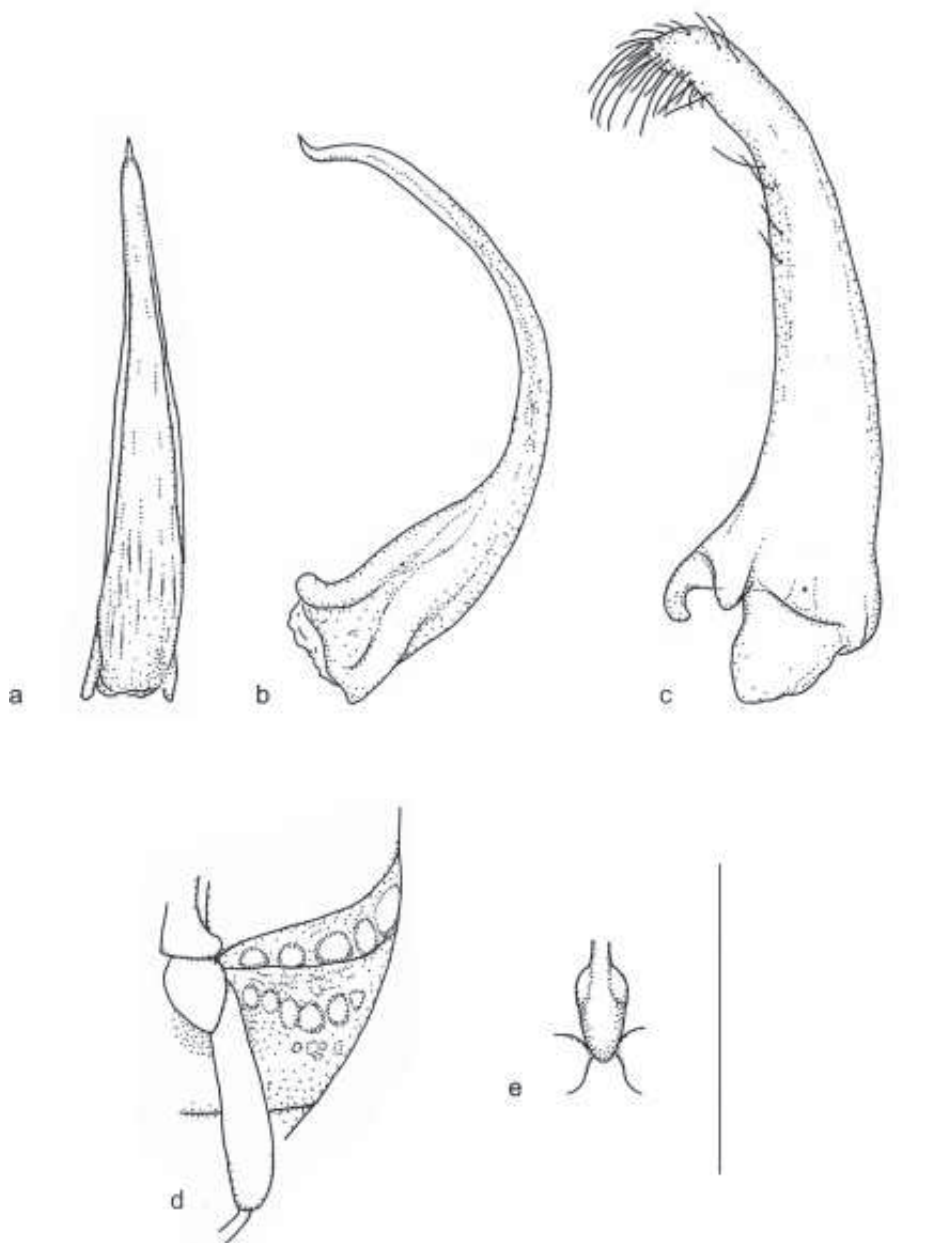


Fig. 2: *Peschetius taprobanicus* sp.n., a) penis, dorsal aspect, b) same, lateral aspect, c) paramere, d) basal abdominal sternites with "macropunctures", e) prosternal process. Scales: 0.5 mm (a–c), 1 mm (d–e).

Legs: Pale ferrugineous. Pro- and mesotarsus somewhat enlarged.

Male: Genitalia as in Fig. 2a–c.

Female: Externally as male, but pro- and mesotarsus slightly narrower.

DISTRIBUTION: Sri Lanka, known only from the type locality.

ECOLOGY: Not known. The type locality lies at an altitude of less than 100 m.

ETYMOLOGY: The epithet name refers to Taprobane, the name of Sri Lanka in ancient times.

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