

Faune entomologique de l'archipel des Comores

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C. W. SABROSKY, 1973

Asteia nigroscutellata Duda

Asteia nitida var. *nigroscutellata* Duda, 1927, *Deutsch. ent. Ztschr.*, 1927 : 130, 138 (Natal, Uganda).
Asteia nigroscutellata Duda; Sabrosky, 1956, *Rev. franç. d'Ent.*, 23 : 229, 231.

Apparently a widely distributed species. I have seen material from Natal, Malawi, and Madagascar.

Female, GRANDE COMORE : Karthala, La Convalescence, 1640-1680 m., 21.XI.1973.

Family MILICHIIDAE

A single tiny female of a new species is all that is available of this family, but study of its generic position raised important questions. It is clearly in the area of *Desmometopa*-*Leptometopa*, but it does not completely agree with either. It lacks the distinct sclerotized interfrontal stripes of *Desmometopa*, on the one hand, but it also lacks the well-developed, subtriangular epistoma of *Leptometopa*. It does have the elongate lunule of the latter, projecting ventrad as a long plate between the bases of the antennae, and it seems closer to that genus than to *Desmometopa*. In particular it resembles the Palearctic species *L. niveipennis* (Strobl).

DUDA (1932, in LINDNER) proposed the genus *Dicraoptera* for *Siphonella niveipennis* Strobl, but he, like STROBL, considered it to be a chloropid. HENNIG (1937, in LINDNER) recognized that it was actually a milichiid, and he synonymized the genus with *Leptometopa*. STROBL's species, that from the Comoros, and another similar but distinct species from Rarotonga in the Cook Islands are distinct from other *Leptometopa* in having numerous mesopleural hairs and a strong presutural bristle. However, the mesopleuron does have a few setae, at least posteriorly, in some typical *Leptometopa* (e.g., in *L. rufifrons* Becker). The single available examples of the Comoros and Cook Islands species also differ from characteristic *Leptometopa* in lacking a pteropleural bristle, but I find that in the 1 male, 8 females of *L. niveipennis* before me the pteropleural bristle is present in the male and absent in the females. The sample is small but suggestive that the character, while present in most species of *Leptometopa*, is sometimes absent. It remains to be seen whether the apparent sexual dimorphism in *niveipennis* will also be true of the similar Comoros and Cook Islands species. These two species, as well as *niveipennis*, show complete rows of interfrontal setae, whereas in most *Leptometopa* the rows are incomplete or the setae are minute and indistinct. In both females (Comoros and Cook Islands), the epistoma is not developed in the characteristic subtriangular form of typical *Leptometopa*, and hence the face is not partitioned by juxtaposition of the apices of lunule and epistoma. However, both species are tiny and the cheek is narrow, and the epistoma is probably normally less developed. In sum, the species is best placed in *Leptometopa*.

Leptometopa matilei, n. sp.

Tiny, gray tomentose species, the head anteriorly yellow, cheek narrow, strong presutural supra-alar bristle present, and mesopleuron with numerous hairs.

Female. Back of head, posterior 3/5 of frons, apex of 3rd antennal segment, arista, and all bristles black in ground color, remainder of head yellow, lunule and cheek whitish. Thorax, abdomen, and all bristles and hairs black. Legs chiefly yellowish, but partly teneral, possibly some infuscation on fore femur. Wing lightly browned, apex of costal cell blackish. Halter yellow.

Frons approximately as broad as long, width at vertex nearly twice width of an eye and nearly half width of head, dull and finely gray tomentose, frontal triangle tomentose but shining and weakly distinguished from rest of frons, about half length of frons; in profile, head 1.14 times higher than long, antennal axis 1.4 times the vibrissal axis, face receding and vibrissal angle not strongly developed;

cheek narrow, only $1/3$ breadth of 3rd antennal segment and $1/10$ height of an eye; frontal lunule elongate triangular, projecting between bases of antennae, its apex approximately opposite apex of 2nd antennal segment and about half length of face; epistoma narrow; proboscis not especially elongate, the haustellum slightly longer than lower margin of head; antenna small, arista 3 times antennal length, distinctly pubescent.

Chaetotaxy: all bristles strong and distinct, inner and outer vertical, parallel postvertical, proclinate and divergent ocellar, 2 laterocliniate upper orbital and 2 mesocliniate lower orbital pairs of bristles; interfrontal rows of setae conspicuous, each row of 7 or 8 setae, of which the anterior is much longer and stronger than the others, and arching forward over the lunule; vibrissa strong; lower cheek margin with 5 proclinate bristlelike setae.

Thorax subshining, finely gray tomentose except for polished area on anterior slope of sternopleuron; mesoscutum convex, length and breadth approximately equal. Bristles long and strong: 1 humeral, 1 + 1 notopleural, 1 presutural and 1 postsutural supra-alar, 1 postalar, 1 posterior dorso-central, 1 apical and 1 subapical scutellar, and 1 sternopleural, also 1 short dorsocentral just anterior to the large posterior one, and a short prescutellar acrostical; mesopleuron with numerous scattered hairs.

Legs slender, without distinctive features.

Wing as usual in *Leptomelopa*, second vein long, distal portions of veins 2, 3, and 4 approximately parallel, apical cell scarcely narrowed; fore crossvein (r-m) opposite $2/3$ length of discal cell.

Length, 1.5. mm.

Holotype, female, MAYOTTE: Route de Combani, 50-150 m., 19.I.1974.

I take pleasure in naming this species for the collector of this interesting lot of specimens, M. Loïc MATILE.

Family CHLOROPIDAE

Eighty-three specimens of 15 species of Chloropidae were found to include 81 specimens and 14 species of Oscinellinae, 9 of them new, and 2 specimens of one species of Chloropinae, also new. This is not unlike LAMB's (1912) findings on the Chloropidae of the Seychelles, for which he recorded a total of 19 species, 16 of them new, and again only one chloropine. In my Ruwenzori paper (SABROSKY, 1951), I found a higher proportion of Chloropinae, 31 species out of a total of 104.

It is unusual not to find representatives of *Cadrema*, *Siphunculina*, and *Eutropha*, which contain widespread littoral species that occur commonly in island collections. However, most of the collecting was apparently done at higher altitudes, and this yielded the good proportion of undescribed and probably endemic species. It is also unusual to find such a high proportion of specimens of *Tricimba*, 46 of the total of 83, but this may be due chiefly to chance collecting of the long series of *T. comoroensis*.

The fauna has a typically Ethiopian habitus. For a key to the genera, see SABROSKY (1951).

Subfamily OSCINELLINAE

Genus DACTYLOTHYREA de Meijere

The genus is widely distributed in the Oriental and Ethiopian Regions, but relatively few specimens have been recorded or seen by me from the latter region. Three species have been described

Mémoires du Muséum National d'histoire naturelle
Série A, Zoologie, Tome 109,