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## A redescription of *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896, with notes on synonymy (Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae, Eumolpinae)

by Stefano Zoia

**Abstract.** A redescription of the leaf beetle *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (Chrysomelidae: Eumolpinae) is given after examination of two syntypes and other material. The following generic and specific synonymies are proposed: *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896 (= *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897 syn.nov.), *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 [= *Pseudomalegia donckieri* (PIC, 1904) syn.nov., comb.nov.]. New combinations in *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896 are provided for the species previously assigned to the genus *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897: *Lahejia fulvipes* (JACOBY, 1898) comb.nov., *L. lefevrei* (JACOBY, 1897) comb.nov., *L. minuta* (WEISE, 1919) comb.nov., *L. schimperi* (LEFÈVRE, 1891) comb.nov., *L. tibialis* (JACOBY, 1901) comb.nov., *L. turkestanica* (REITTER, 1890) comb.nov.

**Key words.** Chrysomelidae – Eumolpinae – *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896 – *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897 – new synonymies – new combinations

In 1896 Gahan described the eumolpine genus *Lahejia* for the new species *L. cinerascens* collected by R. A. Yerbury in “*Aden and the surrounding district*” (GAHAN 1896). This genus has not been addressed since and at present no other species are ascribed to *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896.

The genus *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897 includes seven species distributed from the Southern Urals and Turkestan, through Arabia, to South Africa and Angola. No valuable characters appear to separate its type species (*P. lefevrei* JACOBY, 1897) and other six species from *L. cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (type species of *Lahejia*) at genus level. Moreover, one species of *Pseudomalegia* is synonymised: PIC (1904b) described *Malegia donckieri* PIC, 1904, later transferred to *Pseudomalegia* (DACCORDI 1983), which now appears to be conspecific with the original Gahan’s species.

### *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896

Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. **18**: 459.

**Type species:** *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (by monotypy).

*Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897: 546; **syn.nov.** (type species: *P. lefevrei* JACOBY, 1897; by monotypy).

**Description.** Body elongate, pubescent; wings well developed; antennal club not strongly enlarged; eyes prominent, oval, large; mandibles strong; head prognathous, pronotum a little wider than long, obviously much narrower than the elytra, the base narrower, or as wide as, the distal margin; lateral margins of pronotum obsolete; anterior border of prosternum concave; scutellum small, oblong; elytra obviously longer than wide, with sides moderately convex, parallel in the anterior half, irregularly punctate; epipleura narrow, a little widened proximally; legs moderately long, weak; femora moderately thickened; tibiae not emarginate preapically; third tarsomere widely bilobed;

claws bifid; prosternum longer than wide (width/length ratio 1/6); mesosternum longer than wide (width/length ratio 2/6); metasternum, in the middle, a little longer than the mesosternum; fore coxal cavities closed; pygidium without a median groove.

**Notes.** *Lahejia* is strictly related to the genus *Malegia* LEFÈVRE, 1883, from which it differs in the lack of emargination at the preapical part of the mesotibiae.

### *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896

*Malegia donckieri* PIC, 1904: L'Échange **20(233)**: 36. **syn.nov.** [not examined]

*Pseudomalegia donckieri*: DACCORDI (1983): 225.

**Material examined.** Syntype ♀ labelled as follow: SYNTYPE (round printed label with light-blue margin), TYPE (round printed label with red margin), Lakej. 95—96. (rectangular printed label), South Yemen - Lahej, N of Aden - 1895 - Lt. Col. Yerbury - BM 1895-69 (recent rectangular printed label), *Lahejia cinerascens* – Type Gahan (handwritten rectangular label), Syntype – *Lahejia cinerascens* – Gahan 1896 (recent handwritten rectangular label).

Syntype ♀ labelled as follow: SYNTYPE (round printed label with light-blue margin), Lakej. 95—96. (rectangular printed label), South Yemen – Lahej, N of Aden – 1895 – Lt. Col. Yerbury – BM 1895-69 (recent rectangular printed label), Type ex Gahan (handwritten rectangular label), Syntype – *Lahejia cinerascens* – Gahan 1896 (recent handwritten rectangular label) (both specimens in the Natural History Museum, London). Arabia merid., Yemen, leg. G. Scortecchi, Sokna (Tihama) m. 200, 20.VIII.1965, *Pseudomalegia donckieri* (Pic) det. Daccordi '81 (1 ♂, 6 ♀♀, Museo civico di Storia naturale, Milano; 1 ♀, Naturhistorisches Museum Basel); Shuqaiq am Roten Meer, 2.IV.1983, Saudi Arabia, C. Holzschuh, *Pseudomalegia donckieri* Pic, Daccordi det. 1988 (1 ♀, Naturhistorisches Museum Basel).

**Redescription of the syntypes.** Length 3 mm and 3.4 mm. Body (Figs 1, 2) elongate, dark brown; clypeus, mouthparts, antennae and legs ferruginous. Dorsum covered with whitish and long pubescence. Frons with a weak longitudinal impression in the middle (faint in one specimen); two short lateral ridges on each side near the antennal insertion (Fig. 4); punctation similar to that of the prothorax, formed by large hair-bearing punctures with raised margins and flat bottoms; distal margin of the labrum convex. Eyes prominent, large, oval, with a feeble sinuate emargination near the antennal insertion. Antennae (Fig. 8) reaching the humeral zone; segments 1–6 ferruginous, 7–11 somewhat darker.

Pronotum moderately transverse (length/width: 0.72 mm/0.85 mm and 0.70 mm/0.75 mm), convex, without lateral margins; the maximum width either at the anterior third (first syntype) or at midlength (second syntype); its sides regularly arched, more strongly converging towards the base; distal margin a little wider than the basal; punctation of the prothorax (Fig. 5) as on the head. Pro- and mesosternum longer than wide (Figs 9, 10); metasternum in centre 1.2 times as long as the mesosternum, with a longitudinal, slightly impressed line from the first third to the distal margin, which has a short U-shaped impression in the middle.

Legs (Figs 11, 12, 13) slender; femora moderately enlarged, not toothed; tibiae not emarginate; tarsus about as long as 3/4 of the tibia. Claws bifid (Fig. 7).

Scutellum small, pubescent, longer than wide, with distal margin squared.

Elytra (length/width: 2.50 mm/1.45 mm and 2.12 mm/1.27 mm) with parallel sides along the basal 2/3, regularly arched and converging apically; apical corner nearly at right angle (Fig. 3); punctation strong and irregular (Fig. 6).

**Distribution.** Yemen, Saudi Arabia.

**Notes.** A third, damaged, syntype specimen is preserved in the British Museum (S. Shute, *pers. comm.*). The other specimens examined match the syntypes completely. A specimen from Aden (ex coll. Pic) was studied by DACCORDI (1983: 225), who considered it as conspecific with the material collected by Scortecci and here re-examined.

The aedeagus and the spermatheca are figured by DACCORDI (1983: 226).

PIC (1904b) pointed out the peculiar punctuation of head and prothorax of “*Malegia donckieri*”; this character is also evident at low magnification using diffuse lighting; it was cited by DACCORDI (1979), but not taken into further consideration in his later study (DACCORDI 1983). I noticed this kind of punctuation in the African species examined [*Lahejia lefevrei* (JACOBY, 1897), *L. tibialis* (JACOBY, 1901), *L. fulvipes* (JACOBY, 1898)], but not in *Lahejia turkestanica* (REITTER, 1890), in which the prothorax has a sparsely punctate surface.

DACCORDI (1983) transferred *Malegia schimperi* LEFÈVRE, 1891 to *Pseudomalegia* and suggested that also other species assigned to *Malegia* could be congeneric with *Pseudomalegia* (i.e. *Lahejia*).

The new taxonomic changes for the species assigned to *Pseudomalegia* so far are as follows:

- *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (type locality: Aden).  
= *Pseudomalegia donckieri* (PIC, 1904b) **syn.nov.**, **comb.nov.** (described as *Malegia*; type locality: Aden).
- *Lahejia fulvipes* (JACOBY, 1898) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Malvern, Natal).
- *Lahejia lefevrei* (JACOBY, 1897) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Natal, Estcourt).
- *Lahejia minuta* (WEISE, 1919) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Uhehe, Lukuledi).
- *Lahejia schimperi* (LEFÈVRE, 1891) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (described as *Malegia*; type locality: Abyssinie).  
= *Malegia caffer* PIC, 1904a (type locality: Caffrarie).
- *Lahejia tibialis* (JACOBY, 1901) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Cape Colony, Dunbrody).
- *Lahejia turkestanica* (REITTER, 1890) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (described as *Malegia*; type locality: Dshisak in Turkestan, now Uzbekistan).

### Aknowledgements

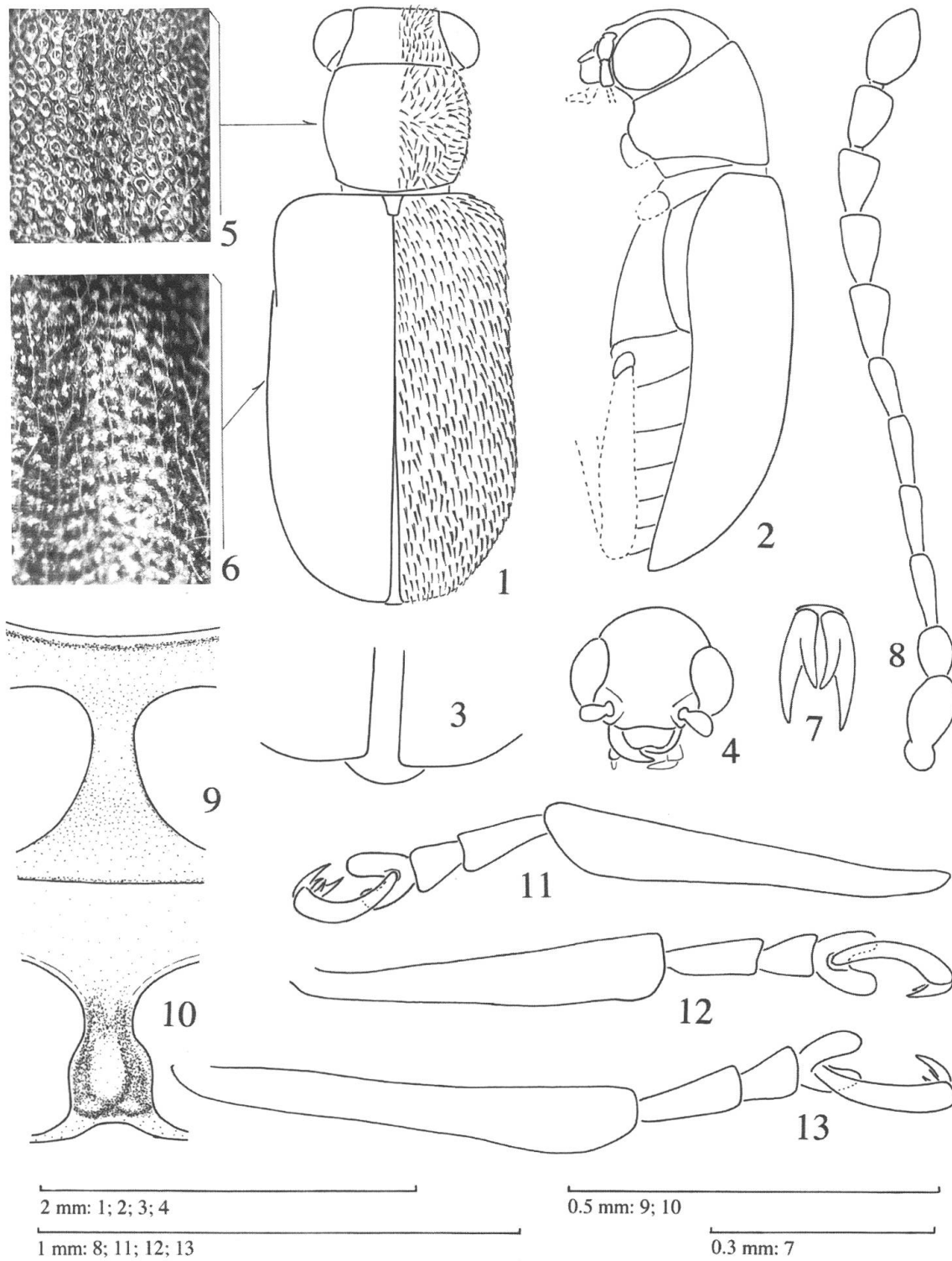
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**Figs 1–13.** *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896, syntype: 1, body, dorsal view; 2, body, lateral view; 3, elytra, apical corner; 4, head; 5, prothorax punctation; 6, elytron punctation; 7, claws; 8, antenna; 9, prosternum; 10, mesosternum; 11, protibia with tarsus; 12, mesotibia with tarsus; 13, metatibia with tarsus.