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Notes on the genus *Lacconectus* with the description of two new species (Col., Dytiscidae)

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Two new *Lacconectus* species (Coleoptera, Dytiscidae) are described from the Himalayas: *L. nepalensis* n. sp. (Nepal: Rapti Khola) and *L. sikkimensis* n. sp. (India: Sikkim). The type-species of the genus *Lacconectus* is discussed, and *L. rossi* BRANCUCCI n. syn. is considered to be a junior synonym of *L. lambai* VAZIRANI.

INTRODUCTION

The study of material recently collected in the Himalayas of Nepal and India has revealed two new species. This confirms the extraordinary proliferation of this genus and the striking localization of the species, as discussed in my revision (BRANCUCCI, 1986). I add some corrections to my previous papers (BRANCUCCI, 1986, 1987) concerning the type-species of this genus and *L. rossi* BRANCUCCI. Including the species described and the changes proposed in the present paper, the genus *Lacconectus* is now represented by 40 species.

Material studied is deposited in following collections: Natural History Museum Basel, in coll. M. BRANCUCCI (MB), Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta (Dr S. BISWAS) (ZSI); Zoologische Staatssammlung, München (Dr. G. SCHERER) (ZSM).

RESULTS

Genus *Lacconectus* Motsch.

In my revision (BRANCUCCI, 1986), I stated that *L. basalis* SHARP was the type-species of the genus *Lacconectus* according to GUIGNOT (1946). This is, however, incorrect as the genus was originally described for one species, *L. fulvescens* MOTSCH., which is therefore the type-species of *Lacconectus* by monotypy. GUIGNOT (1950) corrected his earlier statement.

Lacconectus lambai VAZIRANI

Lacconectus (s. str.) *lambai* VAZIRANI, 1977: 127.

Lacconectus rossi BRANCUCCI, 1986: 155.

VAZIRANI'S 1977 paper was not mentioned in my revision (BRANCUCCI, 1986), but thanks to S. ROCCHI (Firenze) I have finally been able to obtain a copy. Based on the comparison of the descriptions, *L. rossi* BRANCUCCI from Maharashtra proves to be a junior synonym of *L. lambai* VAZIRANI, also from

Maharashtra. *L. lambai* VAZIRANI was described from the holotype ♂ and 13 paratypes. Locality: India, Maharashtra, Satara Distr. Fitzgerald, 5.X.1972, A. P. Kapur. All specimens are deposited in the ZSI.

VAZIRANI (1977) also mentioned *L. fulvescens* MOTSCH., and gave illustrations of the habitus and aedeagus of *L. tonkinensis* GUIGNOT.

Lacconectus nepalensis n. sp. (figs. 1–3)

Body broadly oval, semi-matt, brown, with the sides of pronotum and basal part of elytra paler. Lateral parts of head and discal part of pronotum darkened.

Head brown, the sides broadly dark brown, semi-matt. Surface sculpture consisting of small polygonal and well-impressed meshes and of very minute and numerous punctures. Clypeal grooves, a row of punctures alongside eyes and a transverse depression alongside eyes well-marked; punctures large, strongly coalescent. Antennae testaceous; joints slender, the fifth 1.6 times as long as broad.

Pronotum dark brown, broadly paler at sides, semi-matt. Microsculpture consisting of small, polygonal, almost rounded and well-impressed meshes and of dense and very minute punctures, both coarser and more impressed at sides. Longitudinal median suture long and superficial. Punctures of anterior and lateral rows coarse, numerous and irregularly-distributed, coalescing more often at sides, forming wrinkles in front of the posterior angles. Punctures at middle of each latero-basal quarter small. Lateral margins distinctly bordered, furrow almost reaching the anterior border.

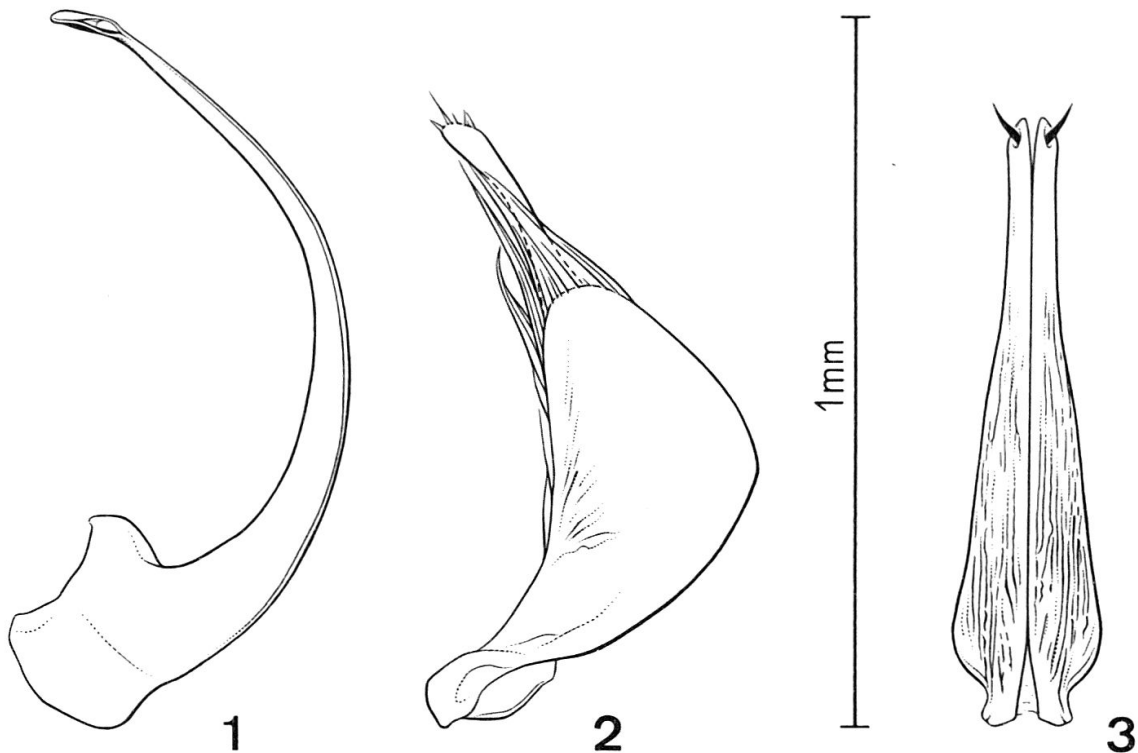
Elytra uniformly brown, except along the extreme lateral borders which are dark brown to black. Epipleura testaceous-ferruginous at base, otherwise brownish-black. Reticulation consisting of very small polygonal meshes which gradually become more elongate and, in the posterior third, are replaced by a fine striolation. Elytra with a weakly shagreened lustre posteriorly. Puncturation consisting of minute punctures that are separated from each other by a distance equal to 2 to 3 meshes, and that are surrounded, particularly after the middle, by petal-like meshes. Sutural row of punctures with several larger punctures situated before middle. Discal and sublateral rows reaching almost to base, punctures very large and irregularly-distributed in apical third, smaller and in a straight line anteriorly. A few large punctures visible only in the interspaces between discal and sublateral rows and between sublateral and lateral rows.

Underside dark brown. Prosternal process 1.5 times as long as broad, distinctly bordered at sides and broadly rounded at apex. Metacoxal lines represented only by very short striae at their mid-length. Sternites 3, 4 and 5 each with a transverse row of sparse and irregularly-distributed punctures. Anal sternite microstriolate except at extreme posterior part, where the microstriolation is replaced by distinct meshes. An oblique row of punctures present on each side of the middle. Posterior margin finely bordered and broadly rounded.

♂. Aedeagus, in lateral view, evenly curved, very thin, uniformly tapered to the apical part, where it is slightly broadened (Fig. 1); in dorsal view, it is also evenly tapered and turned to the right in apical part. Right paramere broad, practically without structure (fig. 2).

♀. Similar to ♂, somewhat more matt. Valvae long and narrow, slightly flattened in apical part, narrowly rounded at apex. Seta short and ventral (fig. 3).

Total length: 4.6–5 mm, width: 2.4–2.5 mm



Figs. 1–3. *Lacconectus nepalensis* n. sp. 1, Aedeagus in lateral view. 2, Right paramere. 3, Valvae of ♀.

Holotype ♂ (ZSM) and 9 paratypes (1♂ and 5♀, ZSM; 2♂ and 1♀, MB): Nepal, Rapti Tal, Monahari Khola, 350 m, 6.V.1967, Dierl, Foster, Schacht.

Affinities: *L. nepalensis* n. sp. is closely related to *L. holzschuhi* BRANCUCCI but can be easily distinguished, in particular by the aedeagus which is very characteristic and allows a very easy identification (fig. 1).

Distribution: Nepal (Monahari Khola)

Lacconectus sikkimensis n. sp. (figs. 4–5)

Body broadly oval, smooth, brown, somewhat darkened alongside eyes and on disc of pronotum.

Head brown, darkened alongside eyes. Surface sculpture consisting of small, and almost rounded and weakly impressed meshes and of very minute punctures, which are more numerous on frons laterally. Clypeal grooves, a row of punctures alongside eyes and a transverse depression alongside eyes well-impressed. Antennae testaceous brown, joints elongate, 5th 1.8 times as long as broad.

Pronotum brown, slightly darkened on disc, smooth. Surface sculpture consisting of small, almost rounded and weakly impressed meshes and of numerous, very minute, almost invisible punctures. Longitudinal median suture distinctly impressed. Punctures on anterior border medium-sized, coalescing at sides only. Punctures on lateral borders and at the middle of each latero-basal quarter medium-sized, only slightly coalescing.

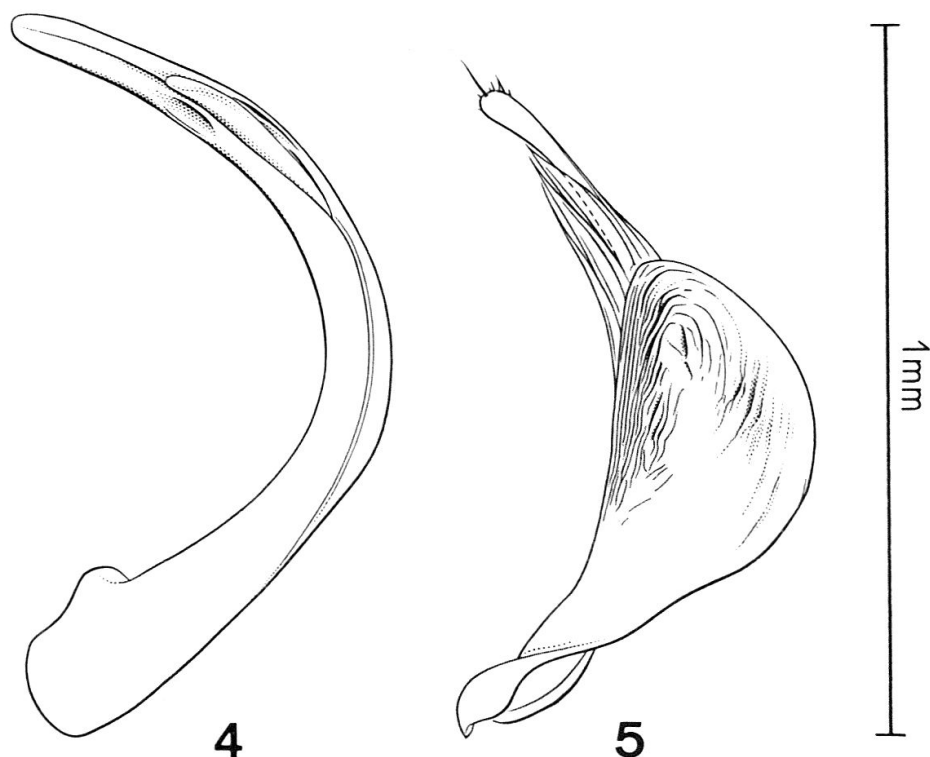
Elytra brown, smooth. Epipleura testaceous at base, somewhat darkened posteriorly. Meshes of the reticulation very small and weakly-impressed on entire surface; on the posterior third they become increasingly elongate and shallower. Punctures very minute and weakly impressed but regularly-distributed and separated from each other by the width of 2 to 3 meshes. Sutural row of punctures limited to a few widely spaced punctures in the apical third and 2 or 3 punctures on the anterior $\frac{2}{3}$. Discal and sublateral rows of punctures broadly interrupted before anterior margin; punctures irregularly distributed in apical part, in a straight line anteriorly. Some larger punctures visible in the space between discal and sublateral rows, particularly in the apical part.

Underside dark brown. Legs testaceous-brown. Prosternal process short, 1.4 times as long as broad, flattened, finely but distinctly bordered at sides and broadly rounded at apex. Metacoxal lines represented only by 3 punctures at the middle of their length. Sternites 3 to 5 each with a transverse row of punctures. Anal sternite with small but distinctly impressed meshes and with small depressions laterally on each side of the middle. Posterior margin finely bordered and broadly rounded.

♂. Aedeagus, in lateral view, strongly curved, uniformly tapered in apical part and broadly rounded at apex (fig. 4); in dorsal view, it is evenly tapered as far as apex. Parameres broad (fig. 5).

♀. Similar to male. Valvae long, narrow, slightly flattened in the apical part, narrowly rounded at apex. Setae short, ventral.

Total length: 4.9–5 mm; width: 2.8–2.9 mm.



Figs. 4–5. *Lacconectus sikkimensis* n. sp. 1. Aedeagus in lateral view. 2. Right paramere.

Types: Holotype ♂ (MB) and 64 paratypes (20 ♂ and 44 ♀, MB): India, S. Sikkim, Hanuman Tok, 2200 m, 24–25.X.1985, Ch. J. Rai; 8 paratypes (3 ♂ and 5 ♀; MB): India, N. Sikkim, Pentong, 1500 m, 22.X.1985, Ch. J. Rai.

Affinities: This species seems to come very close to *L. ovalis* GSCHW. and *L. pederzanii* BRANCUCCI but can easily be distinguished by its larger size and by the microsculpture which is much less distinctly impressed. It differs from all other species in the shape of the aedeagus (fig. 4).

Distribution: India: Sikkim.

The key of BRANCUCCI (1986) should be modified as follows:

- 7. Smaller species (4.4–4.5 mm) 8
- Larger species (4.9–5.4 mm) 7a
- 7a. Lateral margin of elytra and epipleura not darkened
 *L. pederzanii* BRANCUCCI
- Lateral margin of elytra and epipleura dark brown
 *L. sikkimensis* n. sp.
- 12. Aedeagus, in lateral view, more or less broadly rounded at apex . . . 13
- Aedeagus, in lateral view, slender or pointed at apex 12a
- 12a. Aedeagus, in lateral view, very thin and strongly curved (fig. 1)
 *L. nepalensis* n. sp.
- Aedeagus, in lateral view, uniformly tapered in apical part, pointed at apex
 *L. ponti* BRANCUCCI

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I should like to thank Dr. G. SCHERER (Munich) for the loan of interesting material collected in the Himalayas of Nepal.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Zwei neue *Lacconectus*-Arten aus dem Himalaja werden beschrieben: *L. nepalensis* n. sp. (Nepal: Rapti Khola) und *L. sikkimensis* n. sp. (India: Sikkim). Die Typus-Art der Gattung *Lacconectus* wird besprochen, und *L. rossi* BRANCUCCI wird mit *L. lambai* VAZIRANI synonymisiert.

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