

**On the genus *Sphedanolestes* Stål
from the Sudan (Heteroptera: Reduviidae)***

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The genus *Sphedanolestes* Stål, 1866 (Harpactorinae), distributed throughout the tropical and subtropical parts of the Old World, contains numerous and largely still undescribed species. There is no comprehensive revision of the genus except for Villiers' (1948) treatment of species from tropical West Africa and for Linnavuori's (1969) revision of the *pulchellus*-group of the nominate subgenus. Results of the study of material of this genus collected by myself in the Sudan (all lgt. and coll. Štys) are given in this paper. All taxa collected belong in the *pulchellus*-group, and their study was considerably facilitated by the opportunity to examine the extensive collection of Dr. Rauno Linnavuori (Turku, Finland) in his home, for which I express to him my sincere thanks. A major result of this study is the discovery of a new subspecies of *Sphedanolestes pulcher* Schout. in the Jebel Marra in Darfur, which again demonstrates the close faunistic connection between this mountain range and the Ethiopian highlands.

1. *Sphedanolestes* (s. str.) *fenestratus fenestratus* Linnavuori, 1969

Linnavuori, 1969: *Ann. ent. fenn.*, 35 : 219.

Material examined. Sudan, Blue Nile Province: Dinder Game Reserve, Galegu and env. (between 12.15—12.45 N. and 34.47—35.25 E.), 1. and 4. 3. 1967 (Samples No. 663,688), 7 ♂♂, 9 ♀♀; Ingessana Hills, Jebel Gargada (11.40 N., 34.18 E.), 1. 12. 1967 (Sample No. 1146), 2 ♀♀; Ed Damazin env. (11.46 N., 34.21 E.), 29. 11. 1967 (Sample No. 1122), 1 ♀.

Bionomy. All specimens found in the Acacia Tall Grass Forest district in open places; individuals from Galegu swept from the herb *Vahlia digyna* (Retz.) Kuntze (= *V. viscosa* Roxb.) (Saxifragaceae), the others caught while quickly flying under mid-day sun around tall herbaceous vegetation.

Distribution. The nominate subspecies known from the Ingessana Hills (type locality) and the Nuba Mountains (Kordofan); its range is extended by present records to other localities in the Blue Nile Province. *Sphedanolestes fenestratus antigone* Linnavuori, 1969 is known from the North of Ivory Coast only.

Descriptive notes. All specimens examined differ from Linnavuori's (1969) description by a) femora yellowish instead of reddish, b) hind tibiae posteriorly of

*) A 3rd contribution to N. E. African fauna based on material collected by P. Štys in 1965—68.

the short proximal black area not simply ochraceous but distally to a subproximal ochraceous region with a long external black stripe, often almost completely infuscated, c) labium not unicolorous pale, but with the last segment black, the distal portion of the penultimate one infuscated, and often also with the extreme base of labium distinctly infuscated. The coloration of labium would key these specimens to *S. katangae* Schouteden, 1932 and *S. bimaculatus* Miller, 1950; both species have, however, completely different pronotal colour patterns. Otherwise my material fits Linnavuori's description, even as to shape of the pygophore, and comparison with the type series revealed that all the above differences are within the variability range of this species.

2. *Sphedanolestes* (s. str.) *pulcher pulcher* Schouteden, 1906.

Schouteden, 1906: *Ann. Soc. ent. Belg.*, **50** : 15.

Linnavuori, 1959: *Ann. ent. fenn.*, **35** : 220.

Material examined. Sudan, Blue Nile Province: Ingessana Hills, Jebel Gargada (11.40 N., 34.18 E.), 1. 12. 1967 (Sample No. 1146), 3 ♂♂.

Bionomy. Found together with *S. fenestratus fenestratus* Linnav. flying quickly around herbaceous vegetation.

Distribution. The nominate subspecies known so far from the Ingessana Hills and southernmost Equatoria Province (Sudan), Eritrea and W. Aden (Linnavuori, 1969); undoubtedly widely distributed on the Ethiopian Plateau. For the other subspecies see sub 3).

All specimens examined have pronotal colour patterns exactly as illustrated by Linnavuori (1969: fig. 1e).

3. *Sphedanolestes* (s. str.) *pulcher marrensis* subsp. n.

Holotype, ♀, Sudan, Darfur: Jebel Marra, Jebel Uwo (13.03 N., 24.22 E.), 2200—2500 m, 26. 12. 1967 (Sample No. 1204), coll. Štys.

Paratype, ♀, the same data and collection.

Bionomy. Swept from grass and low herbs on high mountain dry steppe.

Description. Length 7.6—8.0 mm. Dark body regions black, pale ones mostly orange, those on the posterior part of prothorax, head and labium yellowish.

First and 2nd antennal segments black, 3rd and 4th brown, progressively paler distally. Dorsum of head almost completely black, either with very minute interocular pale spots or with a minute interocellar pale spot. Venter of head, and lateral preocular and postocular spots pale. Labium black except for pale distal 2/3 of 2nd (1st visible) segment.

Colour patterns of pronotum and mesoscutellum as in Fig. 1. Pronotum with moderately long, yellow to dark brown stiff pubescence. Explanate posterolateral margins of pronotum broad, slightly dorsally reflected, with rounded, prominent subrectangular scutellar angles. Mesoscutellum black, with a minute terminal pale spot not reaching the proximal fovea.

Thoracic pleura and venter of abdomen pale, immaculate except for little contrasting, small, dark connexival spots. Dorsal part of connexivum with moderately large black contrasting spots, dorsum of abdomen with extensive black markings. Exocorium pale, endocorium, clavus and membrane blackish.

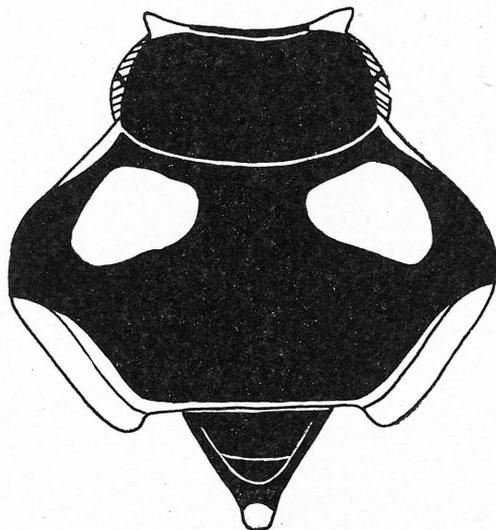


Fig. 1. *Sphecanolestes pulcher marrensis* subsp. n., holotype ♀. Colour patterns of pronotum and scutellum.

Femora pale, without annulation, their very proximal regions and all tibiae black. Tarsi dark brown to black.

Differential diagnosis. See Table 1 and the Key.

Remarks. Distribution of the nominate subspecies *S. pulcher pulcher* Schout. may be characterized as predominantly Abyssinian. The occurrence of a subspecies on the isolated mountain range Jebel Marra in Darfur, separated by some 1100 km from the closest known locality of the nominate subspecies, is further evidence of the close connection between the fauna of the Jebel Marra and that of the Ethiopian Highlands, which often penetrates into the neighbouring parts of the Sudan but usually is missing from the interspaced semidesert or dry savannah Kordofan and Darfur belt. The new subspecies shares some characters with the nominate subspecies, but as a whole it is much more similar to *S. pulcher charon* Linnavuori, 1969 (known from Yemen only; the holotype examined); it is an apparent manifestation of the frequent similarity between subspecies occurring at extreme ends of the range of a species.

Table 1. Diagnostic characters of the subspecies of *Sphedanolestes pulcher* Schouteden

	<i>S. pulcher pulcher</i> Schout.	<i>S. pulcher charon</i> Linnav.	<i>S. pulcher marrensis</i> subsp. n.
First antennal segment	proximally black, distally pale to completely black	proximally black, distally pale	completely black
Dorsum of head	with large interocular pale spots and a small interocellar pale spot	completely black	almost completely black, with minute remnants of pale spots
Pronotal pubescence	longer, paler	shorter, darker	longer, paler
Anterior lobe of pronotum	with large lateral pale spots	completely black (excl. yellow lateral collar tubercles)	completely black (excl. yellow lateral collar tubercles)
Yellow areas on the posterior lobe of pronotum	contrasting, sharply delimited	little contrasting, not sharply delimited	contrasting, sharply delimited
Explanate posterolateral margins of pronotum	rather narrow, scutellar angles little prominent	rather narrow, scutellar angles little prominent	broad, scutellar angles markedly prominent
Yellow scutellar spot	extensive, reaching the proximal fovea	extensive, reaching the proximal fovea	minute, separated from the proximal fovea
Distribution	Sudan: Ingessana Hills, Equatoria; Eritrea; W. Aden	Yemen	Sudan: Darfur: Jebel Marra

Key to the subspecies of *Sphedanolestes pulcher*

- 1 (2) Anterior lobe of pronotum with large lateral pale areas. Dorsum of head with large interocular pale spots and a distinct pale interocellar spot
..... *S. pulcher pulcher* Schouteden, 1906
- 2 (1) Anterior lobe of pronotum completely black (excl. pale lateral collar tubercles). Dorsum of head either completely black or with minute remnants of spots.
- 3 (4) First antennal segment proximally black, distally pale. Scutellar yellow spot extensive, reaching the proximal fovea. . . *S. pulcher charon* Linnavuori, 1969
- 4 (3) First antennal segment completely black. Scutellar yellow spot minute, separated from the proximal fovea. *S. pulcher marrensis* subsp. n.

REFERENCES

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- Villiers A., 1948: Hémiptères Réduviides de l'Afrique Noire. Faune de l'Empire Français, **9**, 489 pp., Librairie Larose, Paris.