Pleurostict scarabs (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae): New distributional records in Arunachal Pradesh, north-east India

Kailash Chandra 1 and Devanshu Gupta 2*

1 Zoological Survey of India, New Alipore, Kolkata-700053, West Bengal, India.
2 Zoological Survey of India, Jabalpur-482002, Madhya Pradesh, India.
* Corresponding author. E-mail: devanshiguptagb4102@gmail.com

Abstract: Based on the specimens present in Zoological Survey of India, (Jabalpur), the paper presents new distributional record of 12 species of Pleurostict Scarabaeidae, comprising eight species of Rutelinae, two species of Cetoniinae, one species each of Melolonthinae and Dynastinae from Arunachal Pradesh (India).

Scarab beetles under family Scarabaeidae, comprise a speciose group and are a conspicuous component of the beetle fauna of the World and adults of these beetles are noticeable due to their relatively large size, bright colors, often elaborate ornamentation and interesting life histories. The Scarabaeoidea is one of the largest superfamilies in the order Coleoptera and includes approximately 31,000 species worldwide of which the family Scarabaeidae is composed of about 91% of all the scarabaeoids and includes about 27,800 species worldwide (Jameson and Ratcliffe 2001). Excluding fossil taxa, currently the family is divided in to 16 subfamilies, 82 tribes and 94 sub tribes (Smith 2006). On the basis of the position of the posterior spiracles, the family is generally divided into two major groups, Laparoesticti (dung beetles) and Pleurosticti (chafer) (Sawada 1991). The latter group (Pleurosticti) is strictly phytophagous with various feeding habits, including some species that do not feed at all in the adult stage while the former one include coprophagous beetles feeding mostly on dung, carrion and vegetable matters.

Chronologically the scarab beetle diversity in the north-eastern states of India had been carried out by various researchers namely Arrow (1910, 1917, 1931); Biswas and Chatterjee (1985); Chatterjee and Biswas (2000a, b); Chatterjee (2004); Sewak (2006); Ahrens and Fabrizi (2009); Singh et al. (2010) and Li et al. (2010). Recently the fauna of the Laparoestict scarabs of Arunachal Pradesh has been compiled and constitute 73 species belonging to 14 genera under subfamily Scarabaeinae of family Scarabaeidae (Sewak 2006) while the Pleurostict scarab fauna is completely lacking despite few scattered publications. Singh et al. (2010) presented a list of 70 species of beetles (Coleoptera) of Kane Wildlife Sanctuary from Arunachal Pradesh and included 12 species of the family Scarabaeidae. Recently Li et al. (2010) revised the Melolontha guttigera group and presented interactive keys and described male genitalia as well as the checklist of the East and South-East Asian Melolontha. Records on the diversity and distribution of the scarab beetles of the subfamilies viz. Melolonthinae, Rutelinae, Dynastinae and Cetoniinae from Arunachal Pradesh are completely lacking.

Specimens examined for the present study constitute the unidentified collections of the Pleurostict scarabs, collected from Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh) (Figure 1). Arunachal Pradesh is situated between 26°28’ and 29°30’N Latitudes and 97°30’ and 97°30’E Longitudes covering an area of 83743 km². Bio-geographically it is situated in the Eastern Himalayan province, the richest bio-geographical province of the Himalayan zone. The entire territory forms a complex hill system with varying elevations ranging from 50m in the foot-hills and gradually ascending to about 7000m, traversed throughout by a number of rivers and rivulets. Rainfall varies from 1000mm in higher reaches to 5750mm in the foot-hill areas, spread over 8-9 months excepting the drier days in winter. The vegetation can be classified as tropical forests, subtropical forests, pine forests, temperate forests and alpine forests.

Pinned specimens were identified with the help of available keys and faunal works mainly of Arrow (1910; 1917) and Li et al. (2010). The details of specimens examined, registration number of collected specimens, distribution in India as well as outside India along with the main diagnostic characters of each species are given. All the species are listed with their valid names, authority and the year of description. Species are listed systematically by tribe and within genera the species are listed alphabetically. The classification adopted in the article is that of Smith (2006). Voucher specimens were deposited in National Zoological Collections of Central Zone Regional Centre, Zoological Survey of India, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, Ministry of Environment and Forests, India.

Altogether twelve species of the Pleurostict scarabs belonging to seven genera, five tribes and five sub tribes under four subfamilies of family Scarabaeidae were
studied. Except *Anomala dimidiata* (Hope, 1831), rest of the eleven species are reported as new to the scarab beetle fauna of Arunachal Pradesh while all the twelve species constitute new district records for Itanagar. Out of these the maximum numbers of species (8) are recorded under the subfamily Rutelinae namely *Anomala cantori* (Hope, 1839), *A. chloropus* Arrow, 1917, *A. dimidiata* (Hope, 1831), *A. variivestis* Arrow, 1917, *A. trochanterica* Arrow, 1917, *Mimela fulgidivittata* Blanchard, 1851, *Popillia macclellandi* Hope, 1845 and *P. nottrotti* Kraatz, 1892. The subfamily Cetoniinae includes two species i.e. *Agestrata orichalcea* (Linnaeus, 1769) and *Heterorrhina punctatissima* Westwood, 1842. The other two subfamilies (Dynastinae and Melolonthinae) are represented by single species i.e. *Alissonotum binodulum* (Fairmaire, 1891) and *Melolontha guttigera* Sharp, 1875 respectively. *A. cantori* and *A. dimidiata* are widely distributed throughout India and recorded only in the Oriental region. On the contrary, *Melolontha guttigera*, *Popillia macclellandi*, *P. nottrotti* and *Heterorrhina punctatissima* are mostly confined to the north-eastern states of India. *Agestrata orichalcea*, one of largest Cetoniine of India with its wide distributional range not only occurs in India but also being recorded from other geographical areas, mainly of the Oriental zoogeo graphical region. Systematic account of the newly recorded species from Arunachal Pradesh, along with their main diagnostic characteristics and geographic distributions are elaborated below.

**SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT**

**Family: Scarabaeidae Latreille, 1802**

**Subfamily: Melolonthinae Leach, 1819**

**Tribe: Melolonthini Leach, 1819**

**Sub tribe: Melolonthina Leach, 1819**

*Melolontha guttigera* Sharp, 1875 (Figure 2A)

Specimens examined: Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, ZSI Complex, (1 ♀), Coll. P. T. Bhutia. (Reg. no. A/16568)

**Diagnostic characters:** Clypeus with short setae and side of eyes heavily setose. Pronotum densely punctured and the sides of pronotal midline with poorly deepened maculation, composed of yellowish white setae. Meso-metasternal process weakly developed, produced weakly beyond meso-coxae to the posterior margin of procoxae. Abdominal sternites without lateral maculation and abdominal surface with setae whitish brown. Protibia tridentate.

**Known geographical distribution:** India: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Sikkim and West Bengal. Elsewhere: Eastern Nepal.

**Subfamily: Rutelinae MacLeay, 1819**

**Tribe Anomalini Streubel, 1839**

**Sub tribe Anomalina Streubel, 1839**

*Anomala cantori* (Hope, 1839) (Figure 2B)

Specimens examined: Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, Papumpare, Road to Yupia, 25.vi.2001 (1 ♀) Coll. P. T.
Anomala chloropus Arrow, 1917 (Figure 2C)


Diagnostic characters: Apple-green with a narrow lateral border on pronotum. Lower surface and femora golden yellow with tibiae and tarsi deep metallic green. Shortly oval, convex and very shining, with the upper surface closely and minutely punctured. Clypeus broadly rounded, with forehead densely and rugosely punctured. Scutellum finely punctured and elytra a little more strongly, with indefinite longitudinal rows of rather larger punctures.

Known geographical distribution: India: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Elsewhere: Myanmar.

Anomala dimidiata (Hope, 1831) (Figure 2D)


Diagnostic characters: Grape green beetle with broad and oval body. Clypeus densely and frons less densely punctuate. Pronotum moderately closely punctuate and coarsely confluent at sides. Scutellum finely punctuate and elytra finely and closely punctuate, with slight traces of longitudinal lines. Pygidium moderately finely and transversely rugose.

Known geographical distribution: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Assam, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Elsewhere: Pakistan.

Anomala trochanterica Arrow, 1917 (Figure 2F)

Specimens examined: Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, ZSI Campus, 23.v.2002 (1 ♂), Coll. P. T. Bhutia (Reg. no. IV/3172).

Diagnostic characters: Black, smooth and shining with a very faint purplish luster upon elytra. Pronotum narrow, finely and closely punctured and strongly attenuated in front. Scutellum bears a few fine punctures and elytra bear faint longitudinal lines of very minute punctures. Pygidium finely and closely transversely strigose. No sternal process. Hind femur very thick and strongly arched, with the trochanter produced as a narrow process at its extremity. Tibia very short and thick and the tarsus broad and rather short.

Known geographical distribution: India: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar) and Sikkim.

Anomala varievestis Arrow, 1917 (Figure 2E)


Diagnostic characters: Oval, convex, very smooth and shining. Testaceous yellow with clypeus forehead and tarsi red and a large patch on each side of the middle line of pronotum which partly fused. Extreme margins of elytra are black. Pronotum closely and finely punctured. Front tibia bi-dentate. Elytra deeply and closely punctuate striate.

Known geographical distribution: India: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar) and Manipur.
patches of dense whitish hairs.

**Known geographical distribution:** India: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Sikkim and West Bengal.

Subfamily: Dynastinae MacLeay, 1819

Tribe Pentodontini Mulsant, 1842

*Alissonotum binodulum* (Fairmaire, 1891) (Figure 2J)

**Specimens examined:** Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, ZSI Colony, (light trap) 17.v.2002 (1 ♀), Coll. P. T. Bhutia. (Reg. no. IV/2915)

**Diagnostic characters:** Black, reddish beneath, very smooth and shining, convex and rather broadly oval. Head rugose bidentate in front and provided with two median tubercles. Pronotum coarsely and rather closely punctured except in the middle, where there is a slight anterior impression and a minute elevation immediately

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**Figure 2.** (A) *Melolontha guttigera* Sharp. (B) *Anomala cantori* (Hope). (C) *Anomala chloropus* Arrow. (D) *Anomala dimidiata* (Hope). (E) *Anomala variistis* Arrow. (F) *Anomala trochanterica* Arrow. (G) *Mimela fulgidivittata* Blanchard. (H) *Popillia macclelandi* Hope. (I) *Popillia nottrotti* Kraatz. (J) *Alissonotum binodulum* (Fairmaire). (K) *Agestrata orichalcea* (Linnaeus). (L) *Heterorrhina punctatissima* Westwood.
in front of it. Scutellum smooth and elytra short and rather broad posteriorly and deeply striated with striae coarsely punctured.

**Known geographical distribution:** India: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.

**Subfamily:** Cetoniinae Leach, 1815

Tribe Schizorhinini Burmeister, 1842

**Sub tribe Lomapterina Burmeister, 1842**

*Agestrata orichalcea* (Linnaeus, 1769) (Figure 2K)

**Specimens examined:** Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, ZSI Campus, (1 ♀), Coll. P. T. Bhutia (Reg. no. A/16570)

**Diagnostic characters:** Metallic green with coxae, femora, mesosternal epimera, pygidium and sides of sternum and abdomen orange-red. Very long, narrow and rather flat. Clypeus narrow and rather straight-sided lightly punctured, but rather more strongly in front. Pronotum very finely coriaceous with minute punctures which are almost distinct at the sides. Elytra very long, smooth, scarcely perceptibly punctured except at the sides, and rather rugose at the extremity.

**Known geographical distribution:** India: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Maharashtra West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. Elsewhere: Bangladesh, Borneo, China, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.

Tribe Goliathini Griffith and Pidgeon, 1832

**Sub tribe Coryphocerina Burmeister, 1842**

*Heterorrhina punctatissima* Westwood, 1842 (Figure 2L)

**Specimens examined:** Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, Papumpure, ZSI Campus, 17.x.2002 (1 ♀) Coll. P.B. Thapa. (Reg. no. IV/ 3488)

**Diagnostic characters:** Dorsal and ventral bright green colored but antennae and tarsi black. Elongate and rather flat. Head rugosely punctured, clypeus being quadrate, shorter than it is broad, with its front margin straight, reflexed and armed with a broad vertical tooth in the middle. Pronotum rather coarsely punctured and rather narrow in front. Scutellum feebly and elytra strongly and closely punctured. Pygidium evenly transversely strigose and metasternum coarsely punctured except in the middle.

**Known geographical distribution:** India: Arunachal Pradesh (Itanagar), Assam, Manipur and Sikkim.

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**Literature Cited**


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