



***Hydrochus farsicus* sp.n. from Iran and notes on other Palearctic species of the genus (Coleoptera: Hydrophiloidea: Hydrochidae)**

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The family Hydrochidae (or subfamily Hydrochinae for some authors) includes one recognised genus (*Hydrochus* Leach) with more than 200 species and a worldwide distribution (Hansen, 1999; Short & Hebauer, 2006). The West Mediterranean is among the most diverse areas for the genus in the Palearctic Region, with 12 species known from Spain and Morocco, including several endemic species described recently (Hansen, 2004). On the contrary, in the East Mediterranean and the Middle East few species are known so far, although some undescribed species from Turkey are deposited in the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien (NMW). No species of *Hydrochus* has ever been recorded from Iran (Hansen, 2004). Other groups of aquatic Coleoptera (e.g. Dytiscidae, Nilsson, 2004 or Hydraenidae, Jäch, 2004) display a more balanced distribution of species, and include a high number of Turkish or Iranian endemics. The situation in *Hydrochus* may be due to lack of knowledge, as the undescribed specimens in the NMW and some recent works (Incekara *et al.*, 2004; Mart *et al.*, 2009) may suggest, but it may be that in Turkey and the Middle East the genus *Hydrochus* is generally less speciose than in the West Mediterranean.

In this paper two species of *Hydrochus* are recorded from Iran, one of which is described as new. In addition, some taxonomic notes on other Palearctic species are provided.

***Hydrochus farsicus*, new species**

Figs 1–2

Type locality. Sepidan, Province of Fars, Iran.

Type material. *Holotype* (NMW): “2 - IRAN Fars, 13.8.1998 / 6km W Sepidan / rd. Sepidan-Yasuj / brook (Cheshmeh Saran) / leg. Elmi & Fery (# 2098)” and holotype label. Aedeagus glued on the same card. Base of aedeagus slightly damaged. *Paratypes* (NMW): Two females with the same data as holotype, plus paratype labels.

Diagnosis. The only reliable characters to identify this new species are those of the male genitalia (Fig. 2). Other putative morphological characters may be shared with still undescribed, closely related species and are thus not reliable for an unambiguous identification.

Description. Habitus as in Fig. 1. Elytra and body appendages brown, except apex of maxillary palpi and base of mandibles darker; head black; pronotum brown with central area darker; surface with light bluish or greenish metallic reflections. Ventral side evenly dark brown, except for head black. Head with deep, coarse evenly distributed punctures, intermixed with smaller punctures with short whitish setae; four small tubercles between eyes. Pronotum elongate, subcylindrical, wider anteriorly; with seven depressions, three anterior, rounder and four posterior, more elongate; lateral posterior depressions smaller, reaching posterior margin of pronotum. Punctuation and pubescence as on head. Elytra subparallel-sided, slightly wider posteriorly; with 10 longitudinal striae formed by deep, regularly aligned punctures. Humeral region of elytra prominent. Tibiae with a regular dense row of setae in upper apical part; femora with evenly distributed small setae. Ventral surface covered with short, thick and dense pubescence, surface strongly microreticulate, cells small and with a shagreen-like aspect. Medial line of ventrites, medial area of metaventrite, and two lateral areas in the metaventrite glabrous or with less dense pubescence. Ventrites with a strong transverse medial ridge, almost forming a carina.