



The genus *Rhamphothrips* in India (Thysanoptera: Thripidae) with description of a new species

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Abstract

Rhamphothrips bhattii sp.n. is described from India based on specimens collected on flowers and leaves of *Tabernaemontana divaricata* (Apocynaceae) in the States of West Bengal and Odisha. The pronotum of this species is longer than any other known member of the genus. A key to the six species of *Rhamphothrips* recorded from India is provided.

Key words: Thripidae, *Rhamphothrips*, *R. bhattii*, new species, key, India

Introduction

The family Thripidae is the second largest family of the Order Thysanoptera, and includes 267 species in 111 genera from India, based on information from Bhatti (1990). *Rhamphothrips* is a small genus of leaf-feeding thripids that currently comprises 16 species from the Old World tropics, of which five species are reported from India (Thrips Wiki 2013). The genus can be distinguished from other thripids by the small head and long mouth cone, also the close position of the two pairs of median setae on sternite VIII of females. Here we describe a new species *Rhamphothrips* from West Bengal and Odisha States collected on flowers and leaves of *Tabernaemontana divaricata* (Apocynaceae). A key to the six species of this genus known from India is provided, based largely on original descriptions.

Rhamphothrips Karny

Rhamphothrips Karny 1913: 123. Type species *Rhynchothrips tenuirostris* Karny 1912.
Rhamphothrips Karny; Bhatti (1978); Mound & Tree (2011).

This genus can be distinguished from other genera in the family Thripidae by the following features: small head and remarkably long mouthcone [Mound & Tree (2011) suggest that the African species may have a shorter mouthcone]; median anteriorly directed fernal process on the prosternum; female sternite VIII with two pairs of median setae close together and distant from the third pair; hypomere of male genitalia typically not dilated subapically.

Biology

The Indian species of *Rhamphothrips* are not commonly collected, and their host plant relationships are not well-established. The five species recorded from India are reported from plant species in four families:

- R. aureus* (Ananthakrishnan) from *Sesbania aegyptiaca* (Fabaceae);
- R. jasmineae* (Bhatti) from *Jasminum sambac* (Oleaceae), and *Ailanthus* sp. (Simaroubaceae);
- R. parviceps* (Hood) from *Ailanthus excelsa* (Simaroubaceae);

Female (macroptera). Colour and size similar to male except pronotum 5 times longer than head and long mouth cone reaching to prospinasternum; mid tibia with one seta at apex; (Figs 5, 11). Abdominal sternite VII with S1 and S2 setae longer than distance between their bases.

Measurements (Paratype female in microns). Body length 1283. Head length 41; width across eyes 100; width across cheeks 98; ventral length to tip of mouth cone 213. Pronotum, length 211; maximum width 162; posteroangular major seta 22. Forewing length 612. Fore femur width 84.

Material studied. Holotype male (macroptera), **INDIA**, West Bengal, Mursidabad, from flowers and leaves of *Tabernaemontana divaricata*, 13.iii.2012, Biswaroop (Registration No. 5127/H-17). Paratypes: same data as holotype, 3 females, 1 male (Registration No. 5128/H-17 to 5131/H-17); Odisha, Gopalpur, 4 females, 4 males, from flowers and leaves of *Tabernaemontana divaricata*, 15.iii.2013, Biswatosh Ghosh (Registration No. 5132/H-17 to 5139/H-17). Holotype and paratypes are deposited in the National Zoological Collections (NZC), Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, India.

Etymology. The name of this new species is in honour of Dr. J. S. Bhatti for his excellent efforts on taxonomy of Indian thrips.

Comments. This new species differs from all other members in the genus, apart from *R. santokhi*, in being clearly bicoloured, and it was compared with a paratype specimen of that species (Registration No. 5097/H-17). It can be differentiated by the pale abdominal segments V–VIII and basal 0.75 of segment IX; fore wing without brown cross band; fore tibia with one strong tooth; pronotum five times as long as head in male and four times in female. In *santokhi* these character states are: abdominal segments V–X brown; fore wing with one brown cross band; fore tibia with two teeth; pronotum 3.5 times as long as head in male and three times in female.

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