



Taxonomic study of the genus *Hesperus* Fauvel (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Philonthina) from Nanling Priority Area for Biodiversity Conservation, China, with description of two new species

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Abstract

A taxonomic study of the genus *Hesperus* Fauvel 1874 from Nanling Priority Area for Biodiversity Conservation, China is presented. Two new species of *Hesperus* are described: *H. baimingi* **sp. nov.** (Hunan) and *H. nanlingensis* **sp. nov.** (Guangdong, Guangxi). Habitus and diagnostic characters of all mentioned species are photographed and illustrated. A key to species of *Hesperus* from Nanling Priority Area for Biodiversity Conservation is provided.

Key words: Staphylinini, new records, new species, Nanling

Introduction

Hesperus Fauvel, 1874 is a species-rich genus within the subtribe Philonthina Kirby, 1837. Currently, the genus includes 228 species worldwide with 16 species from China (Ito 1994; Li *et al.* 2010; Cai *et al.* 2024). *Hesperus* can be readily distinguished from members of related genera by maxillary palpi with palpomere 4 rod-like and distinctly longer than penultimate segment; postmandibular ridge extending ventrally and turning more or less dorsally behind eyes; gular suture subcontiguous or fused at base; first four protarsomeres in both sexes with some modified pale setae ventrally; superior line of pronotal hypomeron bent ventrad at about mid-length of pronotum; lateral puncture of pronotum bearing long seta, separated from superior line by distance at least three times diameter of puncture (Li *et al.* 2010).

Nanling Priority Area for Biodiversity Conservation in Southeast China, is an east-west oriented mountain range spanning Jiangxi, Hunan, Guangdong, Guangxi and Guizhou provinces. As a biodiversity hotspot, the region harbors highly diverse fauna and flora (Wang & Dong 2018). At present, seven *Hesperus* species have been recorded in southern China (Li *et al.* 2010; Cai *et al.* 2024). Yet, none of them is from Nanling Area, which indicates that studies on this area are inadequate. Among material collected from Nanling Priority Area for Biodiversity Conservation since 2010, four *Hesperus* species were recognized with two of them new to science. Therefore, the research result fills the gap of knowledge about diversity and distribution of the genus in southeast China.

Material and Methods

The specimens examined in this paper were collected by flight interception traps, by sifting rotten mushrooms or leaf litter in undisturbed forests. For examination of the genitalia, the last three abdominal segments were detached from the body after softening in hot water. The aedeagus, tergite X and sternite IX together with other dissected pieces were mounted in Euparal (Chroma Gesellschaft Schmidt, Koengen, Germany) on plastic slides. Photos of habitus were taken by a Canon EOS40D with an MP-E 65mm macro photo lens; photos of sternites and aedeagi were taken by a Canon G7 Camera mounted on an Olympus SZX 16 microscope.

The type specimens designated in this study are deposited in the Insect Collection of the Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China (SNUC).

The measurements of proportions are abbreviated as follows:

FL	forebody length, measured from the anterior margin of the clypeus to the apex of the elytra (apicolateral angle)
HL	length of head along the midline
HW	width of head including eyes
EYL	length of eye
TL	length of tempora
PL	length of pronotum along the midline
PW	width of pronotum at the widest point
EL	length of elytra, measured from humeral angle
EW	width of elytra at the widest point

Taxonomy

Hesperus amabilis (Kraatz, 1859)

Chinese common name: 美刃颚隐翅虫
(Figs 1, 2, 14–19)

Philonthus amabilis Kraatz, 1859: 97; Bernhauer & Schubert 1914: 328; Cameron 1932: 152; Scheerpeltz 1933: 1332.
Hesperus amabilis Schillhammer, 1999: 62; Herman 2001: 2676; Smetana 2004: 638. Li, Zhou & Schillhammer 2010: 531.
Hesperus feae Fauvel, 1895: 260; Bernhauer & Schubert 1914: 364; Gridelli 1924: 189; Cameron 1932: 158; Scheerpeltz 1933: 1372; Scheerpeltz 1971: 155, 157; Schillhammer 1999: 62; Herman 2001: 2680; Smetana 2004: 638; Li, Zhou & Schillhammer 2010: 531.

Material examined. China: Guangxi: 1 ♂, 5 ♀♀; Liuzhou City, Jiuwan Shan N. R., Yangmei'ao, 25°11'42"N, 108°38'51"E, alt. 1200m, 24–26.VII.2015, Li & Zhao leg., mixed leaf litter, shift (SNUC).

Measurements. Male: BL: 9.38 mm, FL: 4.37 mm. HL: 1.10 mm, HW: 1.50 mm, EYL: 0.58 mm, TL: 0.37 mm, PL: 1.62 mm, PW: 1.40 mm, EL: 2.00 mm, EW: 2.18 mm. HW/HL: 1.36, TL/EYL: 0.65, PL/PW: 1.16, EL/EW: 0.92.

Female: BL: 8.30–9.15 mm, FL: 4.50–4.60 mm. HL: 1.13–1.18 mm, HW: 1.47–1.50 mm, EYL: 0.53–0.58 mm, TL: 0.35–0.40 mm, PL: 1.68–1.75 mm, PW: 1.50–1.55 mm, EL: 2.08–2.18 mm, EW: 2.25–2.30 mm. HW/HL: 1.28–1.31, TL/EYL: 0.67–0.70, PL/PW: 1.12–1.13, EL/EW: 0.92–0.95.

Distribution. China (Sichuan, Yunnan, Guangxi), Afghanistan, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos. New to Guangxi.

Remarks. The aedeagus of *Hesperus amabilis* in fig. 1D in Li *et al.* (2010) is illustrated partially incorrect as it shows apical portion of paramere with six long setae. In the same paper, eight long setae can be clearly seen in the scanning electron micrograph (fig. 10B in Li *et al.* 2010). By examining the specimens listed in the present paper as well as those from Yunnan and Sichuan, the quantity of long setae located in apical portion of aedeagal paramere is always eight as in Figs 14–17.

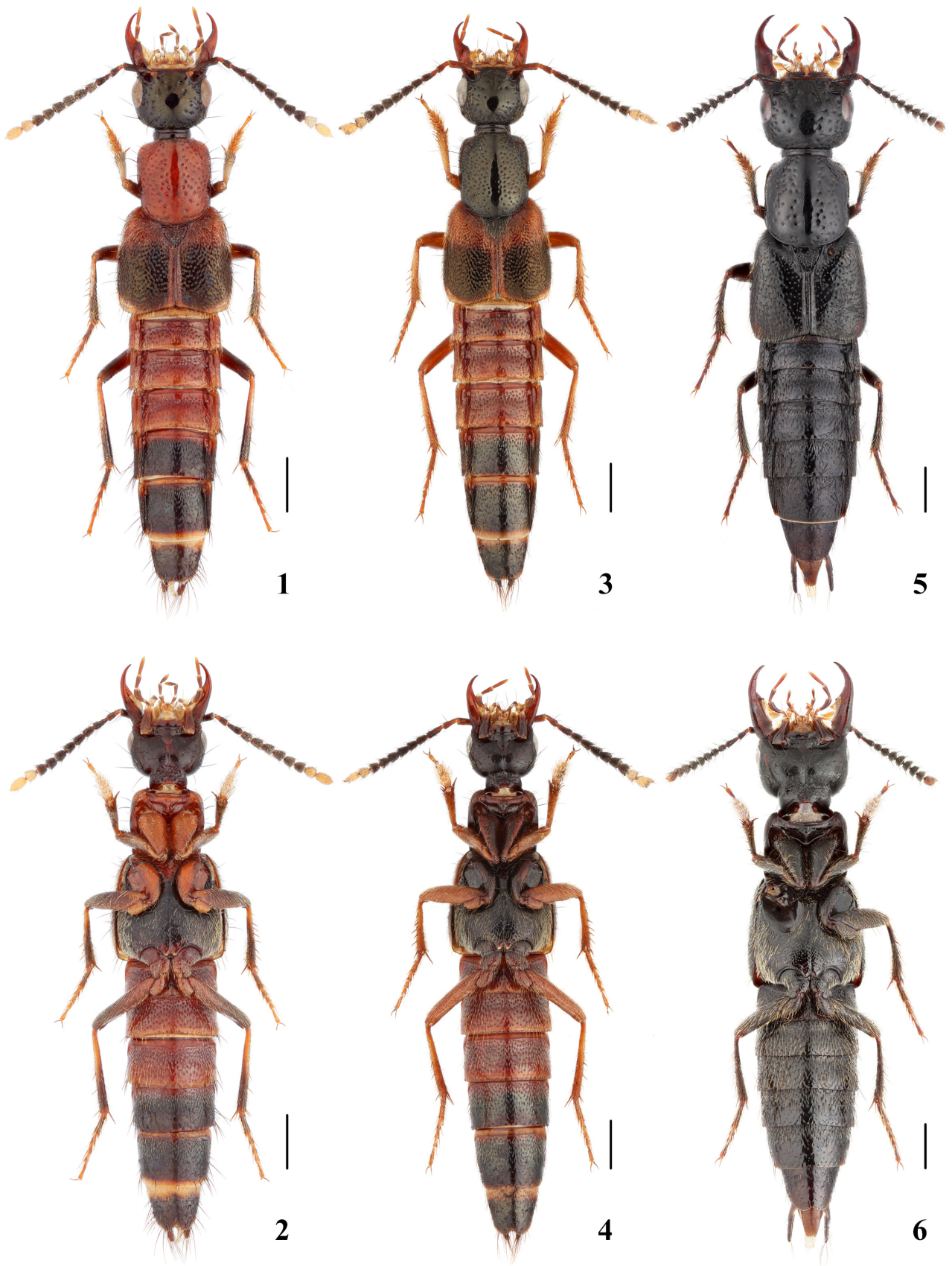
Diagnosis. Externally, *Hesperus amabilis* is unique among the China species: elytra bicolored, antennomeres 10–11 creamy white, pronotum and abdomen with segments III–V reddish.

Hesperus beijingensis Li, Zhou & Schillhammer, 2010

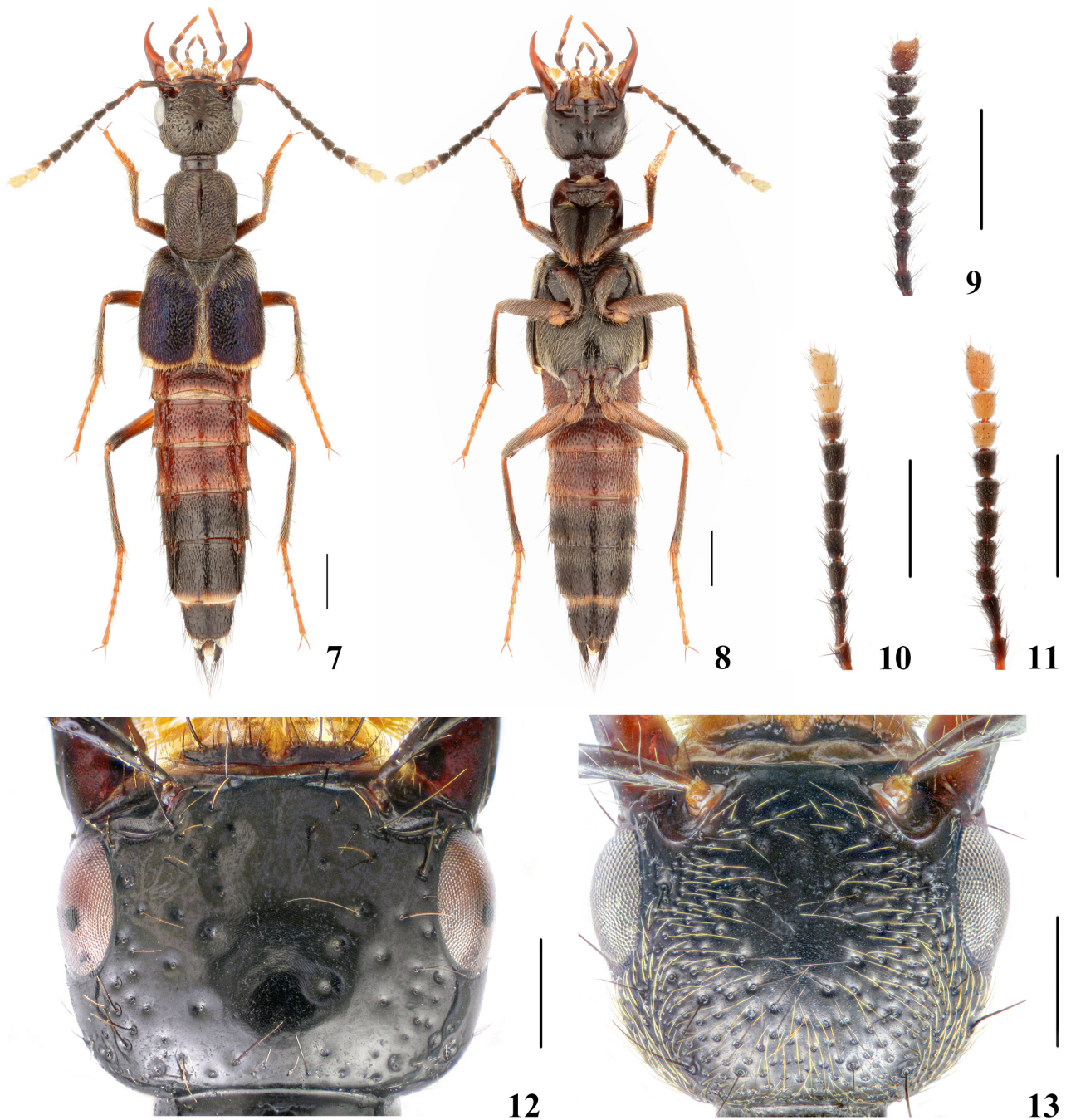
Chinese common name: 北京刃颚隐翅虫
(Figs 3, 4, 20–25)

Hesperus beijingensis Li, Zhou & Schillhammer, 2010: 523.

Material examined. China: Hunan: 1 ♂, 8 ♀♀, Yanling Co., Nanfengmian, 26°18'10"N, 114°00'12"E, alt. 1620 m, 26.V.2014, Peng, Shen, Yu & Yan leg., mixed forest, leaf litter, wood sifted; 6 ♂♂, 16 ♀♀, Yanling Co.,

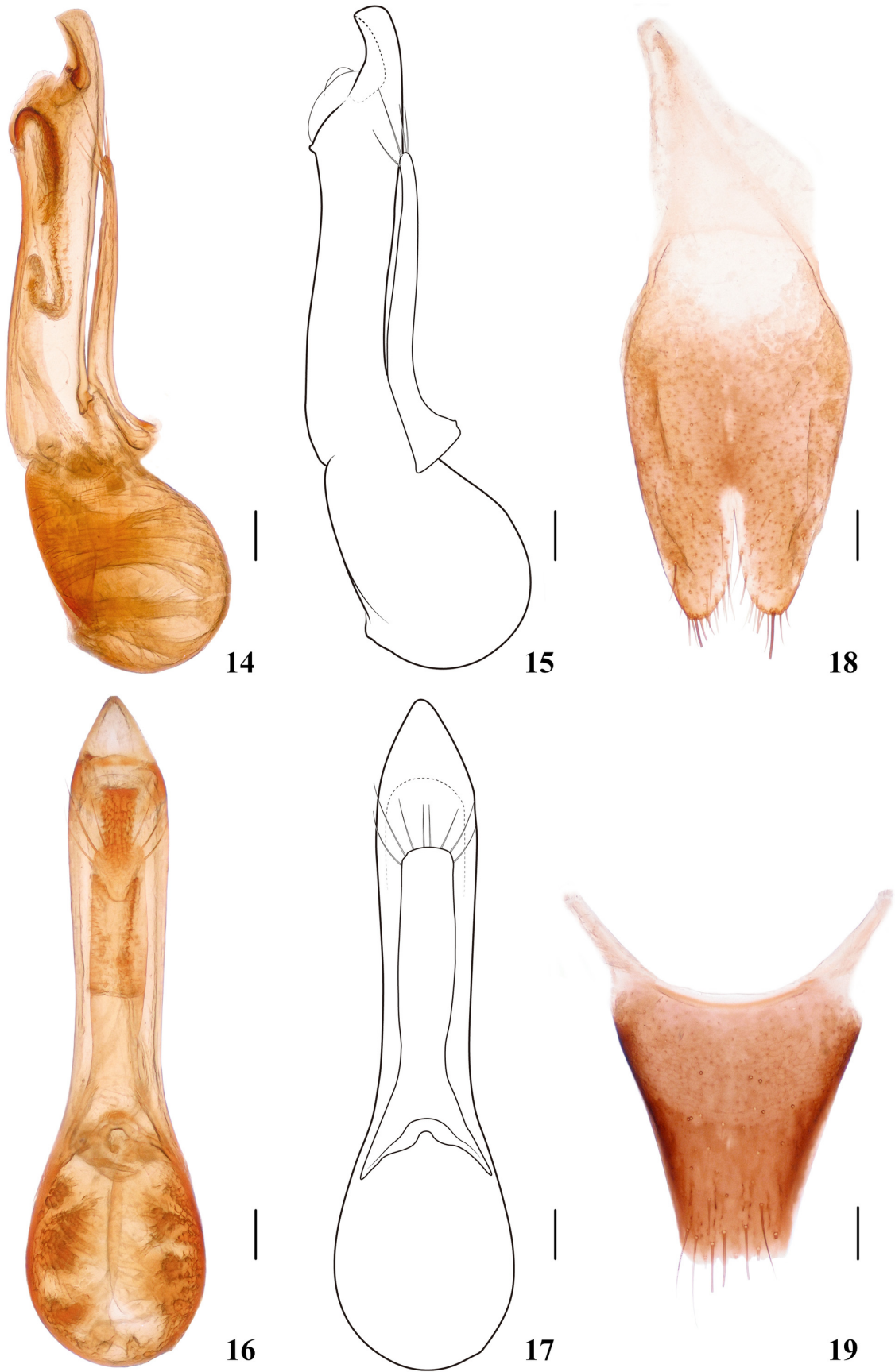


FIGURES 1–6. Habitus. 1, 2. *Hesperus amabilis*. 3, 4. *H. beijingensis*. 5, 6. *H. baimingi*. Scale bars: 1 mm.

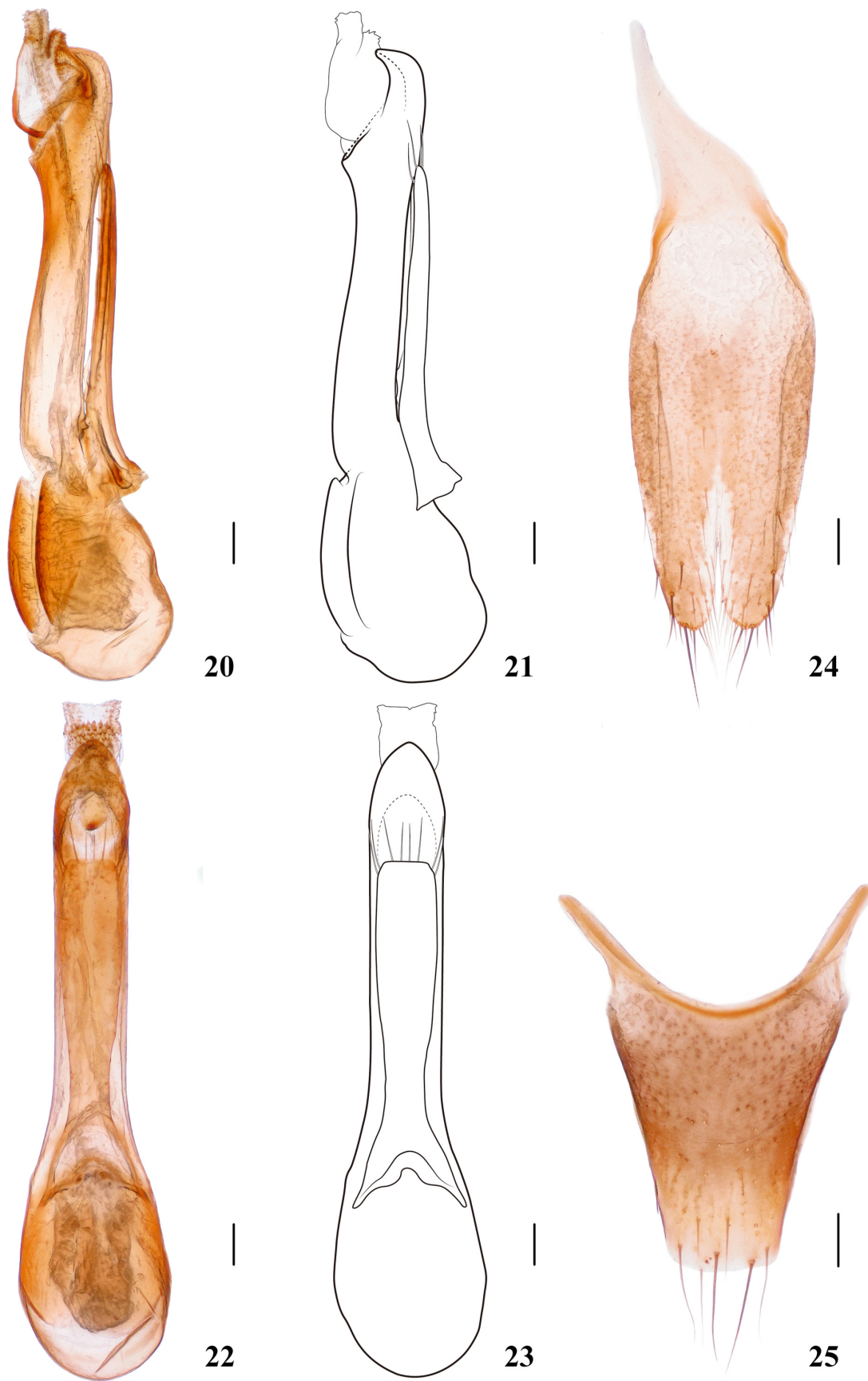


FIGURES 7–13. Habitus and details of *Hesperus*. **7, 8.** habitus of *H. nanlingensis*; **9.** antenna of *H. baimingi*; **10, 11.** antennae of *H. nanlingensis*; **12.** head of *H. baimingi*; **13.** head of *H. nanlingensis*. Scale bars: 1 mm.

Nanfengmian, 26°16'32"N, 113°59'34"E, alt. 1380 m, 27.V.2014, Peng, Shen, Yu & Yan leg., mixed forest, leaf litter, wood sifted; 5 ♂♂, 6 ♀♀, Yanling Co., Taoyuandong N.R., Nanfengmian, 26°17'51.17"N, 113°59'39.38"E, alt. 1500 m, 13.VI.2016, Jiang, Liu, Jiang & Zhou leg.; 1 ♀, Mt. Mang, 10.V.2020, FIT-8; 1 ♂, 2 ♀♀, Mt. Mang, 10.V.2020, FIT-9; 1 ♂, Mt. Mang, 10.V.2020, FIT-10; **Jiangxi:** 1 ♂, 1 ♀, Jinggangshan City, Ciping Town, alt. 850 m; 22.X.2010, Peng, Zhai, & Zhu leg.; mixed forest, leaf litter, wood sifted; 2 ♀♀, Longnan County, Jiulianshan, Huangniushi, 24°31'22.7"N, 114°25'3.6"E, alt. 600–1000 m, 10.V.2021, C.-L. Zhou & C. Li leg.; **Guangxi:** 4 ♂♂, Guilin City, Huaping N. R., Yunxi Valley, 25°33'44.76"N, 109°56'17.08"E, alt. 1350 m, 22–25.IV.2021, Yin, Zhang, Pan & Shen leg., FIT; 2 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, Lingui County, Huaping N. R., Anjiangping, alt. 1200 m, 16.VII.2011, Tang & He leg.; 2 ♀♀, Xing'an County, Maershan, Gaozhai, alt. 500–600 m, 08.VII.2011, Ma, Chen & Peng leg.; 1 ♀,



FIGURES 14–19. Diagnostic characters of *Hesperus amabilis*. **14, 15.** aedeagus in lateral view; **16, 17.** aedeagus in ventral view; **18.** sternite IX of male; **19.** tergite X of male. Scale bars: 0.1 mm.



FIGURES 20–25. Diagnostic characters of *Hesperus beijingensis*. **20, 21.** aedeagus in lateral view; **22, 23.** aedeagus in ventral view; **24.** sternite IX of male; **25.** tergite X of male. Scale bars: 0.1 mm.

Xing'an County, Maoer Mt, Botanical garden, 25°53'03.83"N, 110°29'13.53"E, alt. 1160 m, 09.V.2021, Yin, Zhang, Pan & Shen leg., FIT; **Guangdong:** 11 ♂♂, 19 ♀♀, Ruyuan County, Nanling N. R., Qingshui Valley, 24°54'57"N, 113°01'55"E, alt. 900 m, 04.V.2015, Peng, Tu & Zhou leg., mixed forest leaf litter, sifted; 4 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀, Ruyuan County, Nanling N. R., Babaoshan station, 24°55'43"N, 113°00'58"E, alt. 1030 m, 25.IV.2015, Peng, Tu & Zhou leg., decaying log; 1 ♀, Ruyuan County, Nanling N. R., Laopengkeng, 24°56'29"N, 113°00'27"E, alt. 1360 m, 25.IV.2015, Peng, Tu & Zhou leg., leaf litter, wood, sifted; 1 ♀, Shaoguan, Nanling Nature Reserve, 24°55'43"N, 113°00'58"E, alt. 1020 m, 27.VI.2020, Xia, Zhang, Yin & Lin leg. (all at SNUC).

Measurements. Male: BL: 9.25–10.85 mm, FL: 4.50–5.20 mm. HL: 1.13–1.20 mm, HW: 1.43–1.52 mm, EYL: 0.47–0.60 mm, TL: 0.35–0.40 mm, PL: 1.63–1.72 mm, PW: 1.38–1.45 mm, EL: 2.10–2.15 mm, EW: 2.18–2.25 mm. HW/HL: 1.27, TL/EYL: 0.67–0.74, PL/PW: 1.18–1.19, EL/EW: 0.96–0.97.

Female: BL: 8.60–10.50 mm, FL: 4.80–5.00 mm. HL: 1.15–1.17 mm, HW: 1.42–1.50 mm, EYL: 0.47–0.57 mm, TL: 0.37–0.42 mm, PL: 1.77–1.87 mm, PW: 1.50–1.60 mm, EL: 2.22–2.32 mm, EW: 2.35–2.37 mm. HW/HL: 1.24–1.28, TL/EYL: 0.74–0.79, PL/PW: 1.17–1.18, EL/EW: 0.95–0.98.

Distribution. China (Beijing, Henan, Hubei, Anhui, Zhejiang, Fujian, Sichuan, Yunnan, Hunan, Jiangxi, Guangdong, Guangxi). New to Hunan, Jiangxi, Guangdong, Guangxi.

Remarks. The line drawings of *H. beijingensis* illustrated in fig. 1A in Li *et al.* (2010) face a similar problem as that mentioned in remarks of *H. amabilis*. There should be eight long setae instead of four long setae located in apical portion of aedeagal paramere. This is confirmed by both the scanning electron micrographs (figs 10A, H in Li *et al.* 2010) in that publication and all examined specimens in present paper.

Diagnosis. *Hesperus beijingensis* is very similar to *H. taiwanensis* in appearance, but it can be easily distinguished from the latter by legs reddish yellow and punctures distinctly denser on pronotum and tergites (legs black in *H. taiwanensis*). It is also similar to *H. hainanensis* and *H. emeishanus*, but can be distinguished from *H. hainanensis* by the abdomen with segments III–V reddish (abdomen with segments III–V black in *H. hainanensis*); and from *H. emeishanus* by the antennomeres 10–11 creamy white (antennomeres 9–11 entirely creamy white in *H. emeishanus*).

Hesperus baimingi sp. nov.

Chinese common name: 白氏刀颚隐翅虫

(Figs 5, 6, 9, 12, 26–31)

Type material. HOLOTYPE: CHINA: ♂ glued on a card with labels as follows: “China: Hunan Prov., Mt. Mang, 10.V.2020, FIT-12” “Holotype / *Hesperus baimingi* / Cai & Tang” [red handwritten label] (SNUC). **PARATYPE: CHINA:** 1 ♂, Hunan Prov., Mt. Mang, alt. 1263 m, 15.VIII.2020, FIT-13 (SNUC).

Description. Measurements of male: BL: 10.30–11.66 mm, FL: 5.36–5.47 mm. HL: 1.46–1.50 mm, HW: 1.92–2.07 mm, EYL: 0.65–0.68 mm, TL: 0.55–0.56 mm, PL: 1.89–1.97 mm, PW: 1.80–1.88 mm, EL: 2.32–2.39 mm, EW: 2.54–2.57 mm. HW/HL: 1.32–1.38, TL/EYL: 0.81–0.86, PL/PW: 1.05, EL/EW: 0.90–0.94.

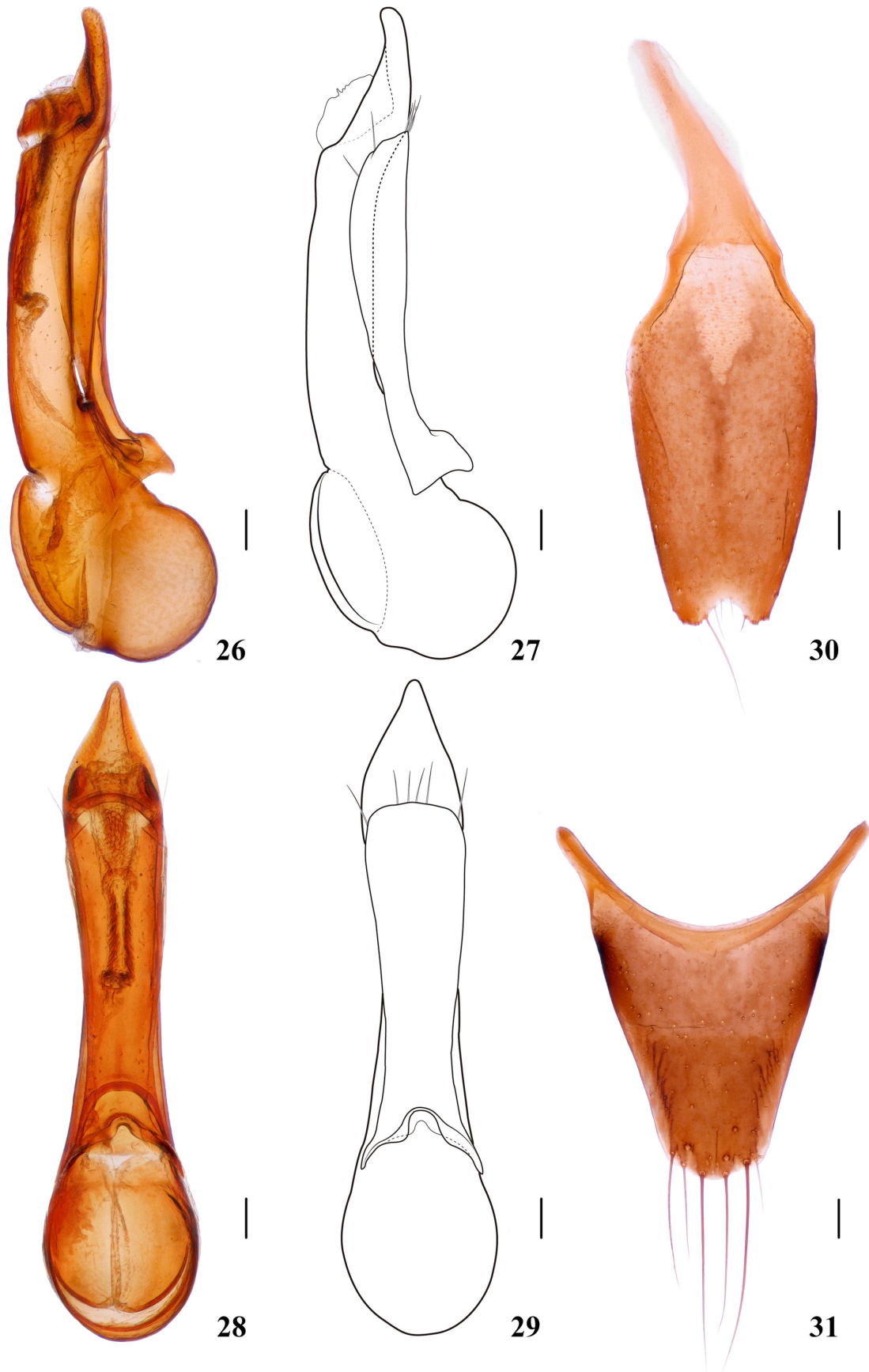
Body pitchy black; antennae (Fig. 9) with antennomeres 1–10 black, base of antennomeres 2 and 3 reddish, antennomere 11 brown; mandibles reddish brown, maxillary palpi with segments 1–3 brown, segment 4 reddish brown, apex of segments 3 and 4 pale brownish, labial palpi brown; abdomen with segments IX and X brown; legs black.

Head (Fig. 12) 1.32–1.38 times as long as wide, rounded trapezoid, slightly narrowed behind eyes, dorsal surface with large, impressed punctures, entire head with distinct microsculpture of transverse waves; antennae moderately long, with antennomeres 5–10 distinctly transverse, antennomere 11 about as long as wide.

Pronotum 1.05 times as wide as long, widest close to anterior angles, narrowed toward base in concave line; dorsal surface with moderately densely, irregularly punctate, size of punctures similar to those on head, with broad impunctate midline, surface with distinct microsculpture similar to that on head.

Elytra 0.90–0.94 times as long as wide, with distinct depression between shoulders, densely and finely punctate, punctures separated about one puncture diameter; pubescence yellowish, along shoulder and posterior elytral margin; scutellum triangular, densely and coarsely punctate.

Abdominal tergites III–VII with two basal lines, bent posteriad before reaching spiracle, punctuation of tergites III–VII dense and pit-like, punctures separated by about one puncture diameter at base, gradually becoming sparser and smaller toward apex of each tergite.



FIGURES 26–31. Diagnostic characters of *Hesperus baimingi*. **26, 27.** aedeagus in lateral view; **28, 29.** aedeagus in ventral view; **30.** sternite IX of male; **31.** tergite X of male. Scale bars: 0.1 mm.

Male. Protarsomeres 1–4 moderately dilated, heart-shaped; sternite VIII with posterior margin emarginate at middle, sternite IX (Fig. 30) with narrow, moderately long, asymmetrical basal portion, apex deeply emarginated, tergite X (Fig. 31) triangular, obtusely pointed at apex; aedeagus (Figs 26–29) with median lobe almost rod-like, narrowed towards apex, slightly asymmetrical in ventral view, apical portion slightly bent dorsad in lateral view; paramere broad, at midlength wider than median lobe, apical margin subtruncate, angulate, with eight long setae, four at apex and two on each lateral margin.

Female. Unknown

Etymology. This species is named in honor of Dr. Ming Bai (白明) who donated us the holotype of the new species.

Distribution. China (Hunan).

Diagnosis. For now, *Hesperus baimingi* sp. nov. cannot be placed in any of the known Asian species groups. Externally, the new species may not be confused with any other species known from China except *H. ignoratus* Ito, 1994. It can be distinguished from the latter only by the shape of the aedeagus: apical margin of aedeagal paramere subtruncate, angulate, with eight long setae, four at apex and two on each lateral margin (apical margin of aedeagal paramere weakly sinuate in the middle, bisetose on each lateral margin in *H. ignoratus*). In general appearance it is also similar to *H. schoedli* Schillhammer, 2005 from Nepal, which has reddish brown elytra; to *H. auricomus* Schillhammer, 2007 and *H. gozukurai* Schillhammer, 2007 from West Palearctic, which both have denser punctuation and smaller eyes; and to *H. apicalis* Say, 1830 from North American, which has reddish abdominal apex.

Hesperus nanlingensis sp. nov.

Chinese common name: 南岭刀颚隐翅虫

(Figs 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 32–37)

Type material. HOLOTYPE: CHINA: ♂ glued on a card with labels as follows: “China: Guangdong Prov., Shaoguan, Ruyuan County, Nanling N. R., 24°55′42.9″N, 113°0′59.05″E, alt. 1050–1200 m, 4.V.2021, Hu, Lin, Zhou & Li leg.” “Holotype / *Hesperus nanlingensis* / Cai & Tang” [red handwritten label] (SNUC). **PARATYPE:** CHINA: 1 ♀, Guangxi Prov., Lingui County, Huaping N. R., Anjiangping, alt. 1300 m, 18.VII.2011, Peng Zhong leg. (SNUC).

Description. Measurements of male: BL: 9.45 mm, FL: 4.73 mm. HL: 1.29 mm, HW: 1.57 mm, EYL: 0.55 mm, TL: 0.55 mm, PL: 1.57 mm, PW: 1.33 mm, EL: 2.14 mm, EW: 2.23 mm. HW/HL: 1.22, TL/EYL: 1.00, PL/PW: 1.18, EL/EW: 0.96.

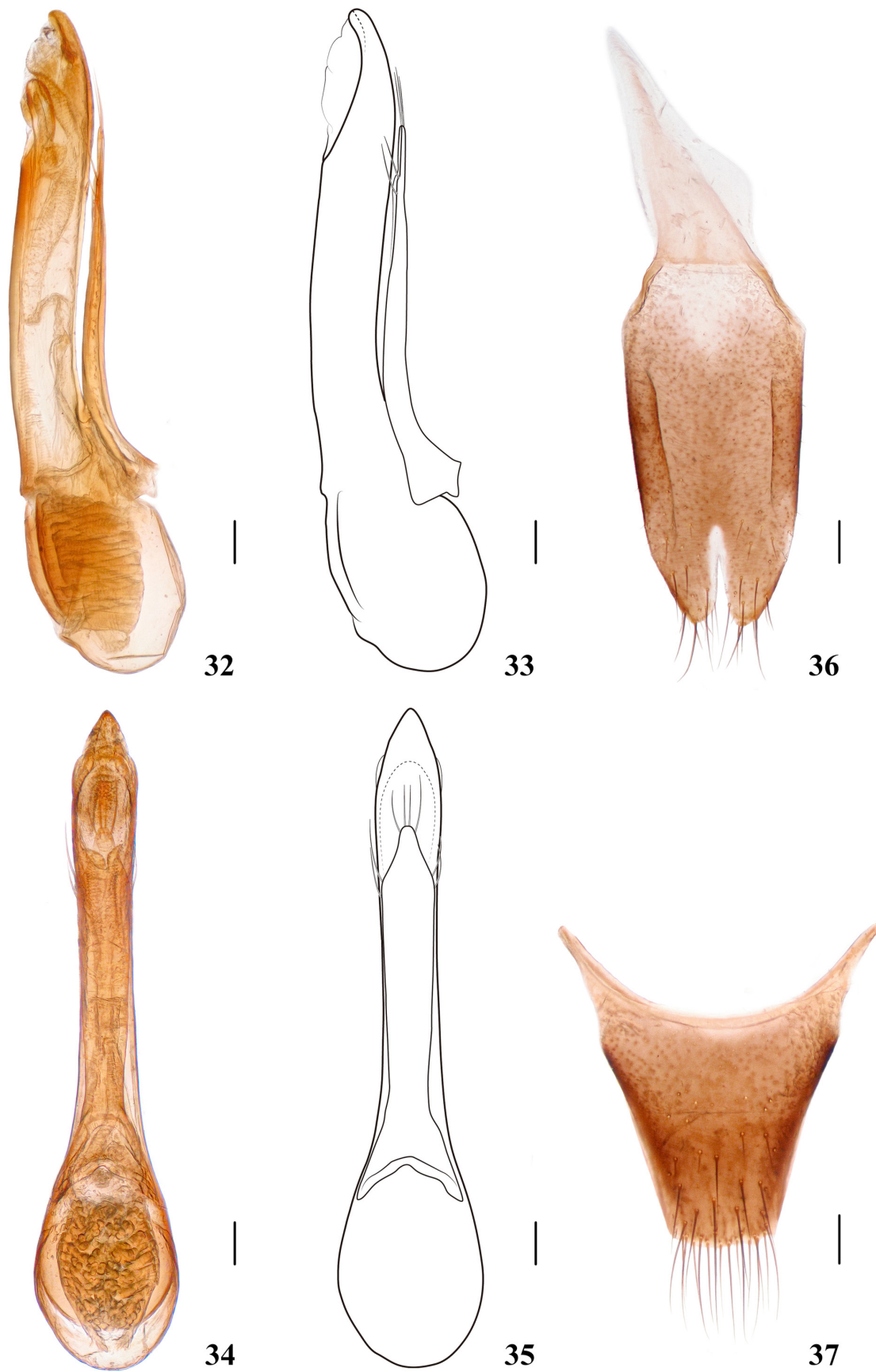
Female: BL: 8.90 mm, FL: 4.73 mm. HL: 1.25 mm, HW: 1.50 mm, EYL: 0.55 mm, TL: 0.47 mm, PL: 1.58 mm, PW: 1.37 mm, EL: 2.20 mm, EW: 2.30 mm. HW/HL: 1.20, TL/EYL: 0.86, PL/PW: 1.15, EL/EW: 0.96.

Head (Fig. 13) and neck black; antennae (Figs 10, 11) with antennomeres 1–8 black, base of antennomeres 2 and 3 reddish, antennomere 9 brown proximally, becoming cream distally, antennomeres 10–11 creamy white (antennomeres 9–11 creamy white in female specimen); mandibles red, maxillary palpi with segments 1–3 brown, segment 4 reddish brown, apex of segments 3, 4 pale brownish, labial palpi brown, apex of segment 3 pale brownish; pronotum black with weakly violaceous reflex; elytra black in basal depression, remaining area violaceous blue with purplish hue, posterior margins pale yellow; scutellum black; abdomen with segments III–V reddish, segments VI–VII black, posterior margin of tergite VII with posterior margin narrowly yellowish, segment VIII with proximal half yellowish and distal half black, segments IX and X brown; legs black with basal portion of femora brown, coxa black.

Head 1.20–1.22 times as long as wide, rounded quadrangular, slightly narrowed behind eyes, dorsal surface with dense, large punctures, becoming sparser toward vertex, vertex impunctate, entire head with distinct microsculpture of transverse waves; antennae moderately long, with antennomeres 4–8 slightly longer than wide, antennomeres 9–10 about as long as wide.

Pronotum 1.15–1.18 times as wide as long, widest close to anterior angles, narrowed toward base in straight line; dorsal with densely and coarsely punctate, punctures separated by less than half puncture diameter, with narrowly impunctate midline, surface with distinct microsculpture similar to that on head.

Elytra 0.96 times as long as wide, with distinct depression between shoulders, densely and finely punctate, punctures separated by about one puncture diameter; pubescence yellow, long and dense along shoulder, suture and posterior elytral margin; scutellum triangular, densely and coarsely punctate, bearing yellow pubescence.



FIGURES 32–37. Diagnostic characters of *Hesperus nanlingensis*. **32, 33.** aedeagus in lateral view; **34, 35.** aedeagus in ventral view; **36.** sternite IX of male; **37.** tergite X of male. Scale bars: 0.1 mm.

Abdominal tergites III with two basal lines, bent posteriad before reaching spiracle, punctation of tergites III–VII dense and coarse, punctures separated by about one puncture diameter at base, gradually becoming sparser and smaller toward apex of each tergite.

Male. Protarsomeres 1–4 moderately dilated, heart-shaped; sternite VIII with posterior margin emarginate at middle, sternite IX (Fig. 36) with narrow, moderately long, asymmetrical basal portion, apex deeply emarginated, tergite X (Fig. 37) triangular, subtruncated at apex; aedeagus (Figs 32–35) similar to that of *H. coarcticollis* Li, Zhou & Schillhammer, but paramere broader, almost as wide as median lobe in ventral view, gently narrowed into obtusely pointed apex, with eight long setae, four at apex and two on each lateral margin.

Female. Protarsomeres 1–4 slightly less dilated comparing with those of male; sternite VIII without medio-apical emargination.

Etymology. The species name refers to the type locality, Nanling.

Distribution. China (Guangdong, Guangxi).

Diagnosis. The new species is very similar to *Hesperus coarcticollis* Li, Zhou & Schillhammer, 2010 (Yunnan, China) in most aspects, but can be distinguished from the latter by head and pronotum black without purple hue (head and pronotum black with strong purple hue in *H. coarcticollis*); coxa black (coxa reddish in *H. coarcticollis*); relatively narrower pronotum with width 1.33mm in male, 1.37mm in female (pronotum with width 1.39–1.47 mm in *H. coarcticollis*); aedeagal paramere broader, almost as wide as median lobe in ventral view (aedeagal paramere slender, distinctly narrower than median lobe in *H. coarcticollis*). The two specimens of the type series share most external characters except for the coloration of antennomeres (antennomere 9 brown proximally, becoming creamy white distally in the male; antennomere 9 entirely creamy white in the female), which is considered as intraspecific variation.

Key to species from Nanling Priority Area for Biodiversity Conservation

- 1 Antennae with antennomeres 6–10 distinctly transverse; abdomen with segments III–V black; abdominal tergite V with two basal lines *H. baimingi* sp. nov.
- Antennae with antennomeres 6–10 oblong; abdomen with segments III–V reddish; abdominal tergite V with only one basal line 2
- 2 Pronotum with relatively coarse and dense punctures; elytra violaceous blue, posterior margins markedly yellowish *H. nanlingensis* sp. nov.
- Pronotum with relatively fine and sparse punctures; elytra reddish with large black markings 3
- 3 Pronotum reddish; aedeagus distinctly shorter *H. amabilis*
- Pronotum black; aedeagus distinctly longer *H. beijingensis*

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南岭生物多样性保护优先区域刃颚隐翅虫属*Hesperus*研究及两新种描述 (鞘翅目: 隐翅虫科: 菲隐翅虫亚族)

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摘要: 对南岭地区刃颚隐翅虫属*Hesperus*分类进行了研究并记述两新种, 即白氏刃颚隐翅虫*H. baimingi* **sp. nov.** (湖南) 和南岭刃颚隐翅虫*H. nanlingensis* **sp. nov.** (广东、广西); 提供了新种的形态特征及南岭物种检索表。

关键词: 隐翅虫族; 新记录; 新物种; 南岭