

A remarkable new species of *Tasgius* (*Rayacheila*) from Kyrgyzstan (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylininae, Staphylinini)

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Abstract. A new, distinctive species of the subgenus *Rayacheila* Motschulsky, 1845 of the genus *Tasgius* Stephens, 1829 is described and illustrated, based on one male specimen taken at high mountain elevation in Kokshaal-Tau range in Kyrgyzstan.

INTRODUCTION

This paper resulted in the need to make a remarkable new species of the subgenus *Rayacheila* Motschulsky, 1845 of the genus *Tasgius* Stephens, 1829 available for the science. The holotype of the species was taken at very high elevation in the Kokshaal-Tau range on the Kyrgyzstan-China border (see further below).

SYSTEMATICS

Tasgius (*Rayacheila*) *bipunctatus* sp. n. (Figs 1-4)

Type material. Holotype (♂): "Kyrgyzstan, Kokshaal Rg., 4200, 17.vii.1999". In the Smetana collection, Ottawa, Canada.

Description. Black, moderately shiny; maxillary and labial palpi dark brunneous; antennae dark brunneous, becoming gradually paler toward apex; legs piceous with slightly paler tarsi and front tibiae; pubescence of dorsal side of body black. Head of rounded quadrangular shape, with broadly rounded temporal area and entirely obsolete posterior angles, markedly wider than long (ratio 1.42), eyes relatively small, flat, tempora longer than eyes from above (ratio 1.5); dorsal side of head with rather fine and sparse punctation, punctation becoming gradually sparser and finer toward clypeus and to the contrary denser and coarser toward tempora and posterior margin of head, interspaces between punctures distinctly larger than diameters of punctures, and about as large to slightly smaller than diameters of punctures on

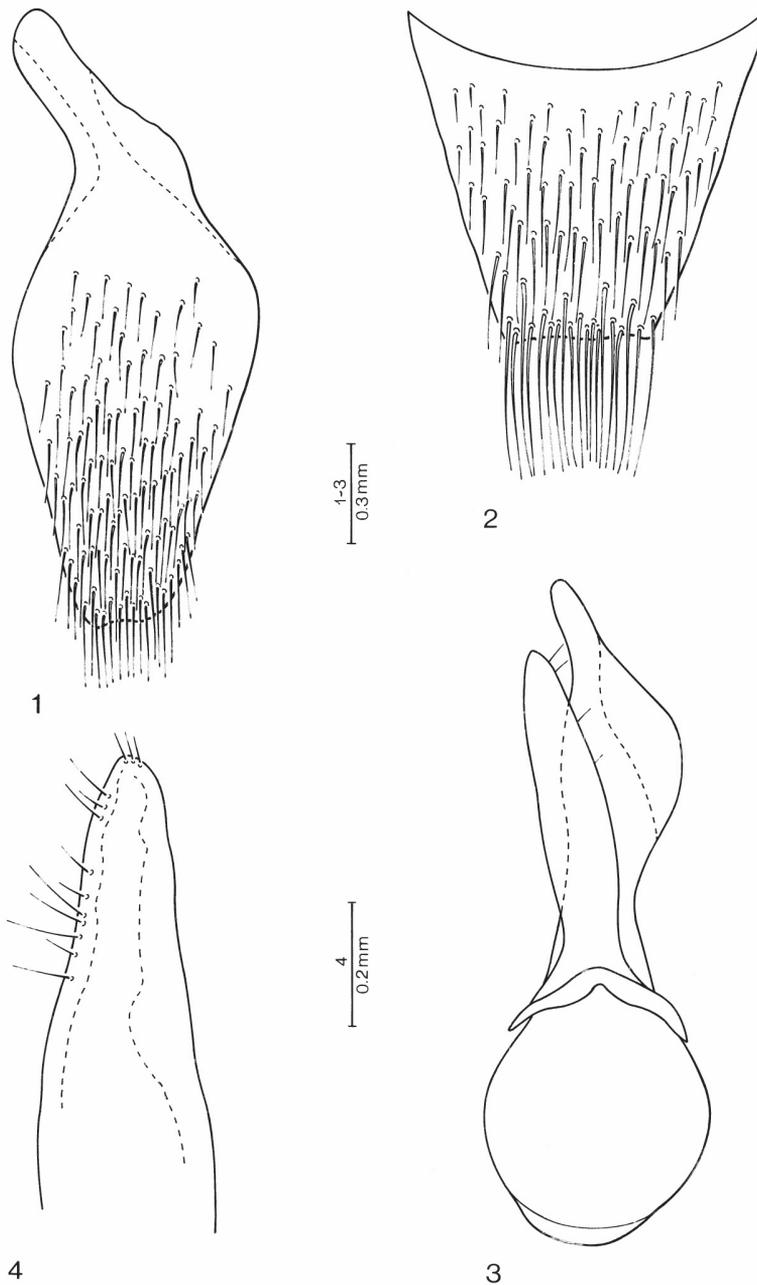
temporal areas and along posterior margin of head; interspaces between punctures without microsculpture, except with fine submeshed microsculpture on temporal areas and along posterior margin of head; two punctures on posterior part of head, bearing occipital setae (Hayashi, 1993), quite coarse, each situated posteromedial of posterior margin of eye, about midway between posterior margin of eye and posterior margin of head. Dorsal side of neck with punctation similar to that along posterior margin of head, small anteromedial area impunctate, interspaces between punctures on lateral portion of neck with fine microsculpture similar to that on head. Antenna moderately long, segment 3 distinctly longer than segment 2 (ratio 1.33), segments 4 to 7 distinctly longer than wide, becoming gradually shorter, segments 8 and 9 slightly longer than wide, last segment shorter than two preceding segments combined. Pronotum vaguely longer than at widest point wide (ratio 1.1), slightly narrowed posteriad, lateral margins each slightly notched before noticeable, subacute posterior angle, narrow marginal groove disappearing downwards at about middle of pronotal length; disc with entire impunctate midline, somewhat dilated before posterior margin of pronotum; punctation on disc about same as that on disc of head, gradually becoming somewhat denser and coarser toward lateral margins; interspaces between punctures without microsculpture. Pronotal hypomerone lacking microsetae. Scutellum relatively large, densely and rather coarsely punctate and setose on entire surface, punctures slightly asperate, surface between punctures with very fine, rudimentary submeshed microsculpture. Elytra moderately long, slightly depressed at base, vaguely dilated posteriad, at suture somewhat shorter (ratio 0.87), at sides about as long as pronotum at midline; punctation coarse and dense, rasp-like, pubescence stiff, black, surface of elytra therefore appearing duller than rest of body; Wings each reduced to small, nonfunctional stump. Abdomen with fifth visible tergite lacking pale apical seam of palisade setae; tergite 2 (in front of first visible tergite) entirely, sparsely and finely punctate and pubescent; visible tergites 1-3 moderately coarsely and densely punctate, punctation gradually becoming finer on large medioapical area, punctation of visible tergites 4-6 finer and more even; interspaces between punctures on basal and lateral portions of all tergites with fine, moderately dense meshed microsculpture that becomes gradually rudimentary to almost absent on medioapical portion of each tergite.

Male. First four segments of front tarsus markedly dilated, subbilobed, each covered with pale modified setae ventrally; segment four markedly smaller than preceding segments. Sternite 8 with rather wide and deep, obtusely triangular medioapical emargination. Genital segment with sternite 9 with long basal portion, apical portion with somewhat asymmetrical apex, as in Fig. 1. Tergite 10 short, markedly, evenly narrowed toward truncate apex, apex with densely set long setae (Fig. 2). Aedoeagus relatively small, shaped as in Figs. 3, 4; median lobe with asymmetrical anterior portion, extended into narrow, rod-like apical portion; paramere situated on median lobe markedly asymmetrically, shaped as in Fig. 3, apex by far not reaching apex of median lobe; sensory peg setae on underside of paramere absent, apical setae fine to minute, situated as in Fig. 4.

Length 14.0 mm (abdomen slightly extended).

Female. Unknown.

Geographical distribution. *Tasgius bipunctatus* is at present known only from the type locality in Kokshaal-Tau on the Kyrgyzstan-China border.



Figs 1-4. *Tasgius (Rayacheila) bipunctatus* sp. n.: 1- sternite 9 of male genital segment; 2- tergite 10 of male genital segment; 3- aedeagus (ventral view); 4- apical portion of underside of paramere with apical setae.

Bionomics. Nothing is known about the collecting circumstances, except that the specimens was taken at very high mountain elevation, very likely in alpine environment.

Recognition and comments. *Tasgius bipunctatus* may be easily recognized by several external characters, i.e. the shape of the head with the broadly rounded temporal area and the pair of punctures bearing occipital setae very coarse, conspicuous, by the configuration of the posterior pronotal margin with lateral margins each slightly notched before noticeable, subacute posterior angle, by the coarse and dense, rasp-like punctation of the elytra, and by the characteristic punctation of the abdominal tergites (see the description). The configuration of the posterior pronotal angles separates *T. bipunctatus* from all habitually similar species of the subgenus *Rayacheila*, except for *T. caspius* Bernhauer, 1906, known from Kyrgyzstan and from “Transcaspia”. However, the latter species lacks the other unique characters of *T. bipunctatus*, listed above and differs by paler coloration of the appendages and the elytra, and by the differently shaped aedoeagus.

The holotype is missing middle right leg.

The type locality “Kokshaal Rg” refers undoubtedly to the Kokshaal- Tau, the massive, very high range within the Tian Shan system, that extends on the Kyrgyzstan/China (Sinkiang) border from the Pobeda Peak (7439 m) almost 500 km SW to Chatyr-Köl lake.

Etymology. The specific epithet is the combination of the Latin adverb *bis* (twice) and the adjective *punctatus*, *-a*, *-um* (bearing punctures). It refers to the presence of the two conspicuously developed punctures on the dorsal side of the head (see description).

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