

***Mentophilonthus davidkrali* sp. nov. from Nepal and India
(Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Staphylininae)**

Lubomír HROMÁDKA¹⁾ & Harald SCHILLHAMMER²⁾

¹⁾ Anny Letenské 7, CZ–12000 Praha 2, Czech Republic; e-mail: hromadka.l@seznam.cz

²⁾ Naturhistorisches Museum Wien, Burgring 7, A–1010 Wien, Austria; e-mail: harald.schillhammer@nhm-wien.ac.at

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Abstract. A new species of *Mentophilonthus* Levasseur, 1966 is described from Nepal and India: *Mentophilonthus davidkrali* sp. nov. Two new combinations are proposed: *Mentophilonthus notabilis* (Kraatz, 1859), and *M. quediiformis* (Cameron, 1932) are transferred from *Philonthus* Stephens, 1829. New synonymy: *Mentophilonthus notabilis* Kraatz (= *Philonthus sikkimensis* Biswas, 2003) The new species is compared with the closely related *M. notabilis*. The aedeagi and important body details of the new species and of *M. notabilis* are figured.

Taxonomy, zoogeography, new combination, new species, synonymy, key, Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylininae, Philonthina, Palaearctic region, Oriental region

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Mentophilonthus* was described by Levasseur (1966; typus generis: *M. triseriatus* (Bernhauer, 1928); originally described as *Philonthus* Stephens, 1829), for some exclusively Afrotropical species. The genus may be recognized by the well developed infra-orbital ridge, reaching anteriorly at least to mid-length of head and mesad toward gular sutures. In addition, the species have large, rather flat eyes, and many of them show a distinct and dense micro-punctuation between the setiferous punctures of the elytra, giving them a remote resemblance with some *Quedius* Stephens, 1829 species of the subgenera *Quedionuchus* Sharp, 1844 and *Distichalius* Casey, 1915. The fact that two Asian species (*Philonthus notabilis* and *P. quediiformis*) also belong to *Mentophilonthus*, went unnoticed for a long time.

This paper serves primarily to officially transfer the above mentioned two species, and to describe a new species (*Mentophilonthus davidkrali* sp. nov.) which was detected among unidentified material originating from Nepal and India. More detailed descriptions and illustrations of the generic characters and the Asian representatives, including a key to species, will be presented in a future paper by the junior author.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Abbreviations

The material used in this paper is deposited in the following collections.

CHP – coll. Lubomír Hromádka (Praha),

CSB – coll. Michael Schülke (Berlin),

NME – Naturkundemuseum Erfurt (Matthias Hartmann),

NMW – Naturhistorisches Museum Wien.

In addition to the above mentioned persons, the authors are grateful to Dr David Král (Charles University in Prague) who presented the holotype to the senior author.

***Mentophilonthus notabilis* (Kraatz, 1859) comb. nov.**

(Figs 1, 3, 5, 7, 8)

Philonthus notabilis Kraatz, 1859: 79.

Quedius taprobanus Cameron, 1918: 171.

Philonthus sikkimensis Biswas, 2003: 272; **syn. nov.**

DISTRIBUTION AND BIONOMICS. The species is very common throughout the entire Oriental region and the southern parts of the Palearctic region: Pakistan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Andaman Islands, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, S-China, S-Japan (Ryukyu Islands), Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines.

Mentophilonthus notabilis is a typical lowland species, preferably inhabiting the edges of stagnant water bodies. The species may be collected at light, especially in rural areas (paddy fields) in large numbers, usually in association with *Philonthus variipennis* Kraatz, 1859 and *P. paederoides* Motschulsky, 1858.

REMARK. We have not studied the type material of *P. sikkimensis*. The original description is highly inadequate which made it difficult to decide whether it should be assigned to *M. notabilis* or *M. davidkrali* sp. nov. However, there are two characters (proportion and color of the pronotum) which support the synonymy.

***Mentophilonthus quediiformis* (Cameron, 1932), comb. nov.**

Philonthus quediiformis Cameron, 1932: 76 (replacement name for *Q. nilgiriensis*).

Quedius nilgiriensis Cameron, 1920: 219 (preoccupied).

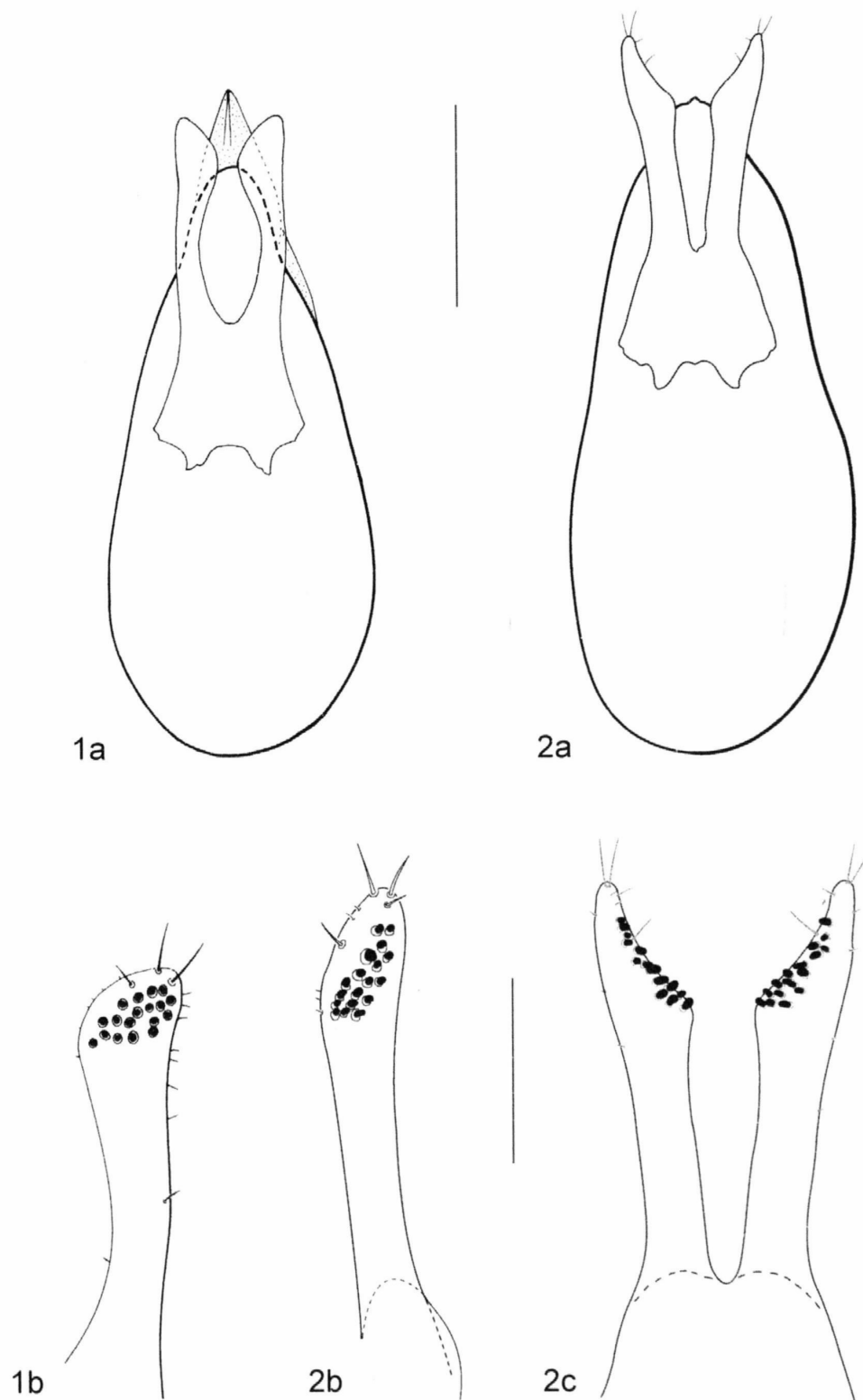
DISTRIBUTION. The species is known only from the Nilgiri Hills and Cardamom Hills in southern India (Cameron 1932).

***Mentophilonthus davidkrali* sp. nov.**

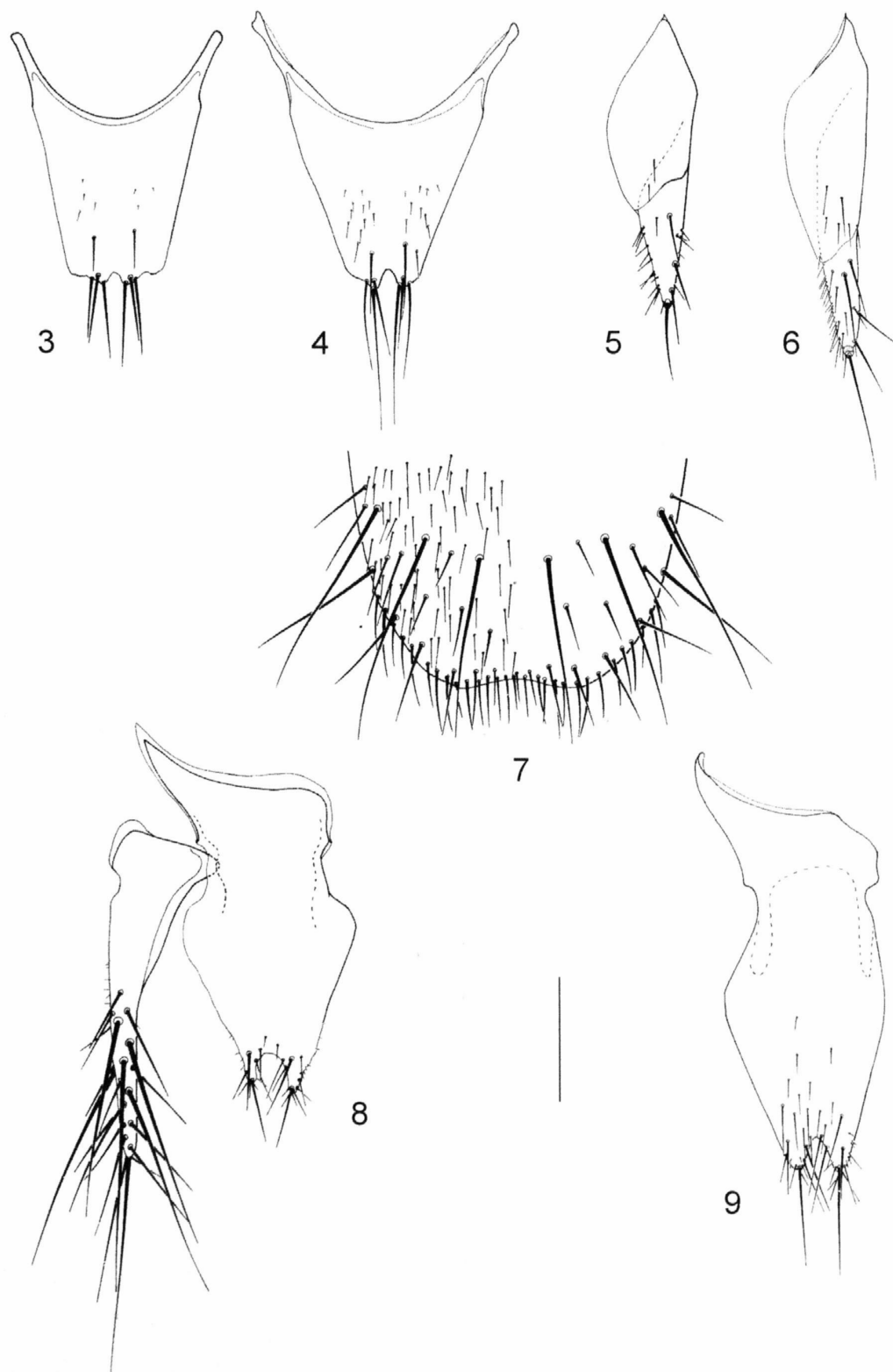
(Figs 2, 4, 6, 9)

TYPE MATERIAL. **Holotype**, ♂: "E-NEPAL 6.–10.7.2000, Kangchenjunga Himal Mts, GHUNSA viii. 3375m, 27. 40N 87. 56E (GPS) env., David Král lgt. NEPAL, Expedition Jan Farkač, David Král and Jan Schneider, 2000" (CHP); **paratypes** (7 spec.): 1 ♂, 1 ♀: "Nepal centr. Sauraha, 20.–25.5.1992, leg. I. Jeniš" (NMW); 2 ♀♀: "NEPAL c. Prov. Narayani, Sauraha, Rapti River, 27°34'51"N 84°29'30"E, 14.–15.07.2001, LF, 180m, riverside, leg. A. Kopetz" (NME); 1 ♂, 1 ♀: "NE-INDIA: Assam, 100 m, Kaziranga wild life, Pan Bari res. For., 12.–21.XI.1997, 26°45'N 93°10'E, Siniaev V., S. & M. Murzin" (CSB, NMW), 1 ♂: almost identical label data as previous (CSB).

DESCRIPTION. 7.0–11.5 mm long (4.0–5.4 mm, abdomen excluded). Head including neck black, clypeus along anterior margin and antennal sockets very narrowly reddish yellow; labrum and mandibles brownish yellow, tips of mandibles darker brown; palpi yellowish, last palpomeres becoming darker brownish distally; antennae reddish yellow with segments 4–9 to variable extent dark brown to blackish; pronotum dark to piceous, anterior margin very narrowly yellowish medially, anterior angles extensively triangularly yellow; elytra black, lateral (deflexed) and posterior margin brightly yellow, yellow portion markedly wider at posterior angles; along suture with variably broad, oval, dark orange-red spot, anteriad reaching slightly beyond posterior angle of scutellum; abdominal segments piceous to black, slightly iridescent, posterior margins of first four visible tergites narrowly but sharply reddish, posterior margins of tergites VII and VIII less sharply and more broadly obscurely yellowish brown; legs amber to reddish yellow.



Figs 1, 2. *Mentophilonthus* Levasseur; Aedeagus of 1) *M. notabilis* (Kraatz), 2) *M. davidkrali* sp. nov.; a) aedeagus, ventral view, b) semilateral view of parameral branch, c) entire paramere. – Scale bar represents 0.4 mm (a), 0.2 mm (b, c).



Figs 3–9. *Mentophilonthus* Levasseur; female tergite X of 3) *M. notabilis* (Kraatz), 4) *M. davidkrali* sp. nov.; gonocoxites of female genital segment of 5) *M. notabilis*, 6) *M. davidkrali*; 7) male sternite VIII of *M. notabilis*; 8) male sternite IX and tergite IX of *M. notabilis*; 9) male sternite IX of *M. davidkrali*. – Scale bar represents 0.4 mm.

Head suborbicular to slightly subrectangularly transverse (large males), 1.16–1.25 as wide as long; eyes occupying almost entire lateral length of head, 3.33–5.14 as long as very short tempora; in addition to usual postocular macro-setae, with a row of short and stout setae along postero-ventral margin of eye, the grooves of which forming an indistinct temporal carina; medial interocular punctures exceedingly widely separated, situated slightly in front of lateral interocular punctures; surface of head impunctate, with fine but very dense microsculpture of transverse and oblique waves.

Antennae moderately long, bent backward almost reaching hind angle of pronotum; antennomere 2 slightly longer than antennomere 3, length of remaining antennomeres slightly variable, usually antennomere 4 inconspicuously oblong, antennomeres 5 and 6 about as long as wide, remaining antennomeres inconspicuously wider than long, antennomere 11 as long as or slightly longer than antennomere 4.

Pronotum about as long as wide or slightly wider than long ($L/W = 0.96\text{--}1.01$), sides subparallel in basal half, slightly narrowed toward anterior margin; posterior angles weakly marked, rounded, base of pronotum regularly convex; dorsal rows each with two punctures (puncture at anterior margin not counted, because it is missing in most specimens at least on one side), occasionally one puncture missing; with one large sublateral puncture of same size as punctures of dorsal rows, situated halfway between dorsal rows and lateral margin and (lengthwise) between punctures of dorsal rows; microsculpture similar to that on head.

Scutellum moderately densely, exceedingly finely punctate, punctures distinctly smaller than those on elytra; wavy microsculpture much finer than on head and pronotum.

Elytra along sides about as long as wide, slightly widened posteriad, at base only slightly wider than pronotum; very finely and densely punctate, size of punctures slightly smaller than one eye facet, separated by about one puncture diameter in transverse direction; pubescence greyish to golden (depending on angle of view and light); in addition, with a longitudinal row of 4–6 larger punctures on disc about half way between suture and lateral margin. Due to the dense general punctation, these punctures are not as easily discernible as in *M. notabilis*.

Abdomen with first four visible tergites with two basal lines, elevated area between basal lines impunctate; remaining surface of tergites exceedingly finely and rather sparingly punctate, finer and much less dense than on elytra, pubescence of same color as on elytra.

Male. First three protarsomeres strongly dilated, subbilobed, protarsomere 4 much less strongly dilated, triangular; first four tarsomeres bearing modified pale setae ventrally; sternite VIII hardly differing from that of *M. notabilis* (Fig. 7); sternite IX with highly asymmetrical basal portion, apex slightly emarginate, each lobe bearing one moderately long macro-seta (Fig. 9; *M. notabilis*: Fig. 8); aedeagus (Fig. 2a) with huge phallobasis occupying about half length of median lobe, apical portion of median lobe lightly sinuately narrowed toward rather roundly pointed apex; paramere (Figs 2b, c) deeply bilobed, each lobe bearing about 14–16 irregularly arranged peg setae along oblique truncate apical margin; aedeagus and paramere of *M. notabilis*: Figs 1a, b.

Female. First three protarsomeres much less distinctly dilated than in male, protarsomere 4 small, only first three protarsomeres bearing modified pale setae ventrally; gonocoxites of female genital segment (Fig. 6) larger than in *M. notabilis* (Fig. 5), medial margin of second gonocoxite with denser and finer setation; tergite X (Fig. 4) with more distinct medio-apical emargination than in *M. notabilis* (Fig. 3) and with somewhat longer terminal setation.

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS. The new species is very similar to *M. notabilis* but differs, in addition to the different aedeagus, by the slightly longer antennomeres, the broader pronotum with yellow anterior angles, the much denser punctation of the elytra, and the finer and less dense punctation of the abdominal tergites. Another noteworthy fact is that the male protarsomere 4 of *M. notabilis* is lacking the pale modified setae.

DISTRIBUTION. The species is at present known from Central and East Nepal, and from north-eastern India.

BIONOMICS. Except for the holotype (3375 m a.s.l., in a mixed *Abies-Quercus-Rhododendron* forest) all specimens have been collected at elevations below 200 m a.s.l. (partly together with *M. notabilis*) in a riparian-like habitat or at light. It might be quite likely that the holotype specimen has been carried up the mountains by a strong wind current.

ETYMOLOGY. The new species is named in honor of Dr David Král, a specialist in Scarabaeoidea, who collected the holotype.

Acknowledgements

In addition to the persons mentioned in the Abbreviation section, the authors are grateful to Dr David Král (Charles University in Prague) who presented the holotype to the senior author.

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