



THE FIRST REPORT OF STINK BUG *MYCTERIZONBELLUS* (PENTATOMIDAE: AESOPINAE) FROM WESTERN GHATS OF MAHARASHTRA STATE, INDIA

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Abstract:

Stink bug *Mycterizonbellus Distant, 1902* (Pentatomidae: Aesopinae), is reported from Maharashtra state for the first time. This species was observed at light source in the evergreen forest areas of Dodamarg Tehsil in the Western Ghats of Sindhudurg district. The images of both male and female, brief morphology, along with current geographical distribution is given.

Keywords: Stink Bug, Aesopinae, Pentatomidae, Mycterizon, Sindhudurg.

Introduction

The family Pentatomidae (True bugs) is one of the largest families of Heteroptera, generally known as stink bugs or shield bugs. The maximum species of family Pentatomidae are considered phytophagous pests, while some are predatory in nature and act as biological control agents. Members of Pentatomidae show great variation in colour, size, and shape; some are brightly coloured, while a few blend well with their surroundings. This is one of the most species-rich families within Heteroptera, representing approximately 5,000 species distributed in 940 genera and 10 subfamilies worldwide (1), of which the subfamily Pentatominae contains 3,484 described species in 660 genera globally (1).

Early comprehensive work on Indian Pentatomidae was carried out by Distant (2,3,4), who documented detailed information on 250 species of bugs across 25 genera in *Fauna of British India including Ceylon and Burma*. To date, approximately 390 species belonging to 151 genera have been reported from India, classified under four subfamilies: Pentatominae, Podopinae, Phyllocephalinae, and Asopinae (predatory) (5–14). Among these, the subfamily Pentatominae is the most dominant, comprising about 300 species spread under 120 genera recorded in India.

In comparison to the overall Pentatomidae fauna of India, the state of Maharashtra is relatively underrepresented, with only 58 known species belonging to 42 genera under two subfamilies (15). The species *Mycterizon bellus* (Distant, 1902) (2) was originally described by Distant (1900) under the genus *Arducta* Walker (1867). In a later work (2), it was transferred to the genus *Dunnius*. According to Salini and Viraktamath (5), the genus *Dunnius* was then represented in India by three valid species: *Dunnius bellus* (Distant, 1900), *Dunnius fulviscens* (Dallas, 1851), and *Dunnius sordida* (Kirby, 1891).

However, a recent taxonomic revision revalidated the genus *Mycterizon* Breddin and transferred *Dunnius bellus* to *Mycterizon* (13,14). The species is now properly recognized as *Mycterizon bellus* (Distant, 1902). This finding contributes to the faunistic knowledge of Pentatomidae in Maharashtra and extends the known geographical distribution of the species.

***Mycterizonbellus* (Distant, 1902) (Fig. 1-6)**

Araductabella Distant, 1900: 427.

Dunniusbellus Distant, 1902: 233, fig. 146.

Mycterizonbellus Breddin (1909): 279. (syn)

Material examined India: Maharashtra: 1♂ and 1♀, Shri Bhootnath Temple, Sonaval, 15°47'35"N to 74°04'18"E, 105m msl, 22.ix.2024, at light source, Coll. Anurag Sinari.

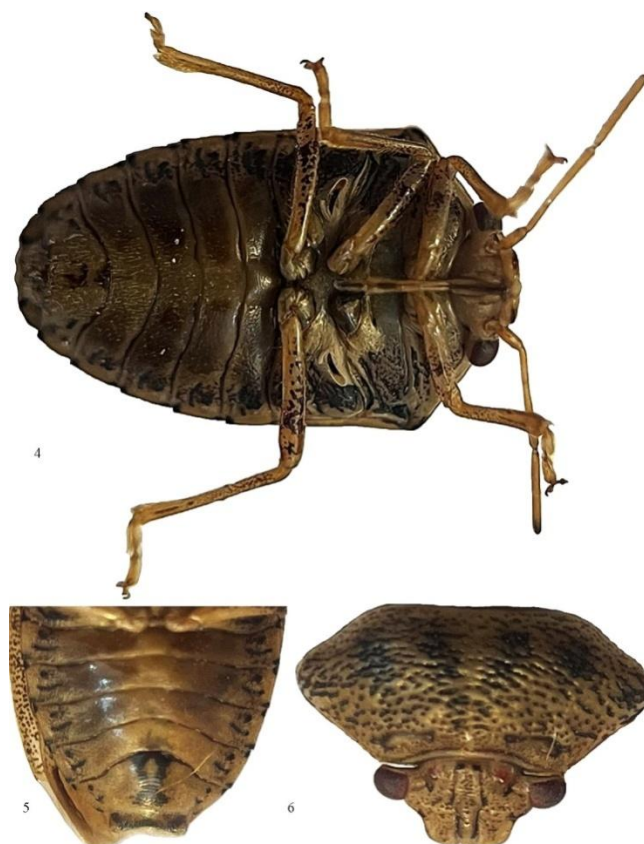


Plate:2. 4-6. *Dunnius bellus* (Distant). 4. Ventral view of female; 5. Abdomen of male, and 6. Thorax, male.

**Figure 1: Morphological characteristics of *Dunnius bellus* (Distant)
a. Ventral view of female; b. Abdomen of male, and c. Thorax, male**

Adult (Male)

Body medium to large sized; body shape somewhat oval. General coloration is brownish to yellowish. Head ochraceous, sparsely punctured; median region with small black spots and thin longitudinal black stripes. Ocelli are red; compound eyes brownish. Antennae are five-segmented, pale ochraceous. First segment short, extending slightly beyond head apex; second segment slightly longer than first; third segment longer than second but slightly shorter than fourth and fifth; fourth and fifth segments nearly equal in length. Rostrum ochraceous, reaching up to mid-coxae. Second segment longest; fourth segment shortest; third segment slightly longer than fourth. Pronotum brownish yellow, moderately punctured with black punctures between humeral angles; few indistinct longitudinal black spots present. Scutellum ochraceous, with prominent black punctures; distinct black stripes present at both base and apex. Corium ochraceous with black punctures; membrane brassy black. Ventrally pale ochraceous; sternum and abdomen with scattered black punctures. Legs pale ochraceous with black punctures, especially on femora; claws black.

Body length: 9 to 10mm.

Distribution

Sri Lanka and India: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Kerala, Karnataka, Odisha, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra (New record).

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