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A new record of *Platambus* Thomson, 1860 from Laos and notes on the distribution of the subgenus *Agraphis* Guignot, 1954 (Coleoptera, Dytiscidae)

by Michel Brancucci

Abstract. *Platambus (Agraphis) regulae* Brancucci, 1991 is recorded for the first time in Laos. This is the first record for any species of the subgenus *Agraphis* Guignot, 1954 in Laos. A key to the subgenus is provided.

Key words. Coleoptera – Dytiscidae – *Platambus* – *Agraphis* – Laos

Introduction

Only three species of *Platambus* Thomson, 1860 are currently known from Laos: *P. strbai* Hendrich et Balke, *P. incrassatus* Gschwendtner and *P. phufahensis* Brancucci. The present note adds a fourth species to the faunal list for Laos by recording the presence of *P. (Agraphis) regulae* Brancucci for the first time.

In my revision of *Platambus* (BRANCUCCI 1988), I recognized 3 species belonging to the subgenus *Agraphis* Guignot, 1954: *P. sawadai* (Kamiya) from Japan, *P. kempfi* (Vazirani) from India and *P. punctatipennis* Brancucci from China. Since then, 3 more species have been described, *P. (A.) khukri* Brancucci from Nepal (BRANCUCCI 1990), *P. (A.) regulae* Brancucci from Vietnam (BRANCUCCI 1991), and *P. (A.) micropunctatus* Nilsson from China (NILSSON 2003). This subgenus now includes 6 species.

New records of *Platambus*

***Platambus (Agraphis) regulae* Brancucci, 1991**

Platambus regulae Brancucci, 1991: *Mitt. Schweiz. Ent. Ges.* **64**: 345.

Material studied. “Laos, Xamneua State, a creek between Saleui & Ph. Pan, 20°13'07.1"N, 103°59'58.9"E, 1453m, 20, 23.V.2004, M. L. Jeng leg. ” (1 male, Naturhistorisches Museum Basel).

Remarks. This species was described from a series of 15 specimens collected by several collectors at a single locality (Sa Pa in the Prov. Hoang Lien Son). Comparison of the holotype of this species and the newly-collected specimen from Laos shows that they are undoubtedly conspecific. There are some slight differences in the puncturation of the elytra, with the specimen from Laos being somewhat less strongly punctured than the type-series.

***Platambus kempi* (Vazirani, 1970)**

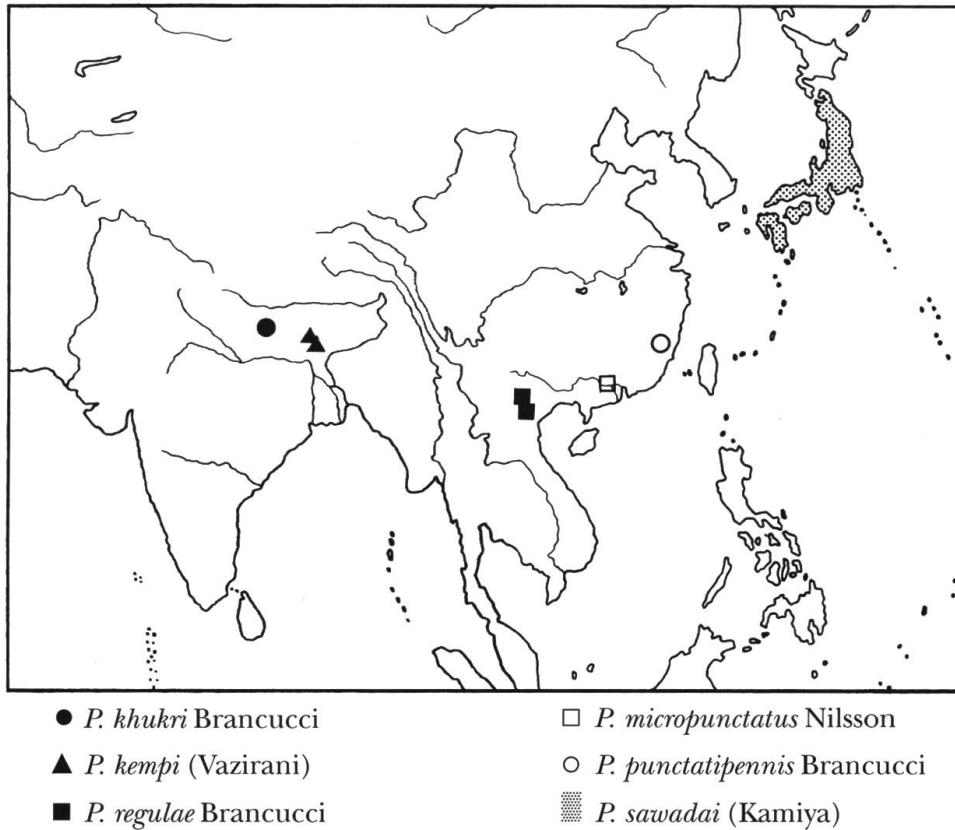
Agraphis kempi Vazirani, 1970: *Or. Ins.* **4**: 330.

Material studied. “Nepal, Kosi, Mure, 27°30’N, 86°16’E, 2000–2100m, 6–8/11–12.VI.2001”; Expedition of Naturhistorisches Museum Basel to Nepal (1 specimen, Naturhistorisches Museum Basel).

Remarks. This is the first record of this species in Nepal. Mure is actually in the extreme east of Nepal, not very far from previously known localities (Darjeeling Distr. and Sikkim).

Key to the species of the subgenus *Agraphis*

1. Smaller species (5.8–6.4 mm). Punctures on elytra regular in size and evenly distributed. 2.
 - Larger species (6.9–8.2 mm). Punctures on the elytra variable in size, irregularly distributed, partly arranged in rows. 3.
2. Smaller species (6.4 mm). Punctures on the elytra very dense, constant in size and regularly distributed. China (Fujian). ***P. punctatipennis* Brancucci**
 - Smaller species (5.8 mm). Punctures on the elytra dense and fine. China (Guangdong). ***P. micropunctatus* Nilsson**
3. Smaller species (6.9–7.5 mm). Elytra always with a testaceous subapical spot. Aedeagus, in lateral view, evenly tapered in apical part. 4.
 - Larger species (7.4–8.2 mm). Elytra with or without a testaceous subapical spot. Aedeagus, in lateral view, evenly broadened in apical part. 5.
4. Elytra with only a few small punctures in addition to the larger punctures. Parameres narrow and strongly transverse. Aedeagus, in dorsal view, strongly narrowed at apex. India (Darjeeling Distr., Sikkim) and Nepal. ***P. kempi* (Vazirani)**
 - Elytra with numerous distinctly impressed smaller punctures in addition to the larger punctures. Aedeagus, in dorsal view, broadly rounded at apex. Nepal (Bagmati). ***P. khukri* Brancucci**
5. Smaller species (7.4–7.8 mm). Body rounded, convex. First two elytral rows of punctures aligned, without punctures in the first interspace. Aedeagus rounded at apex. N Vietnam (Hoang Lien Son) and Laos (Xam Nua). ***P. regulae* Brancucci**
 - Larger species (7.9–8.2). First row of punctures (sutural) aligned, second with numerous non-aligned punctures. Body elongate, more or less parallel-sided and flattened. Aedeagus narrowly rounded at apex. Japan. ***P. sawadai* (Kamiya)**



Map 1. Distribution of the subgenus *Agraphis* Guignot.

Discussion

The known distribution of the subgenus *Agraphis* is surprising. It covers a very large area, from Nepal throughout India to China, Japan, Vietnam and now Laos. Each of the five known species occurs mainly in a single country. Furthermore, except for *P. (A.) sawadai* (Kamiya) which is distributed throughout Japan, all the other species are known from only a very few localities, mostly just from one (Map 1). On the basis of these facts, it seems probable that the subgenus *Agraphis* will contain many more species than are known at present and will also have a much wider distribution. Similar hypotheses have been put forward for the species of *Platambus* (s.str.).

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