

A new species of *Platambus* (s.str.) Thomson, 1859 from Laos (Coleoptera, Dytiscidae)

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Entomologica Basiliensia et Collectionis Frey**

Band (Jahr): **29 (2007)**

PDF erstellt am: **17.09.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-980926>

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A new species of *Platambus* (s.str.) Thomson, 1859 from Laos (Coleoptera, Dytiscidae)

by Michel Brancucci

Abstract. The occurrence of the genus *Platambus* Thomson, 1859 in Laos is discussed, and *Platambus* (s.str.) *sisouthami* sp.nov. is described from north-eastern Laos.

Key words. Coleoptera – Dytiscidae – *Platambus* – Laos – new species

Introduction

In the past few years, several localities in Laos have been visited, particularly in the mountainous north where the fauna of the country seems to be extremely rich. The regular discovery of species new to science clearly illustrates this. My last collecting trip brought me to the north-western area, to the provinces of Xieng Khouang and Hua Pan. Numerous specimens of *Platambus* (s.str.) Thomson, 1860 belonging to two species were collected. One has proved to be new to science and is described here. It represents the fourth species of *Platambus* (s.str.) occurring in Laos (BRANCUCCI 1988, 2004, 2005; HENDRICH & BALKE 1998).

Material

The material examined in this study is deposited in the Natural History Museum of Basel, Switzerland (NMB).

Taxonomy

Platambus (s.str.) *sisouthami* sp.nov.

(Figs 1–7)

Type material. Holotype ♂ (NMB): “LAO-NE, Hua Phan prov., Phu Phan Mt., ~20°12’N 104°01’E, 1500–1900m, 17.V.–3.VI.2007, M. Brancucci”. 4 Paratypes (1 ♂ and 3 ♀; NMB): same locality as holotype.

Description. Body elongate-oval, distinctly convex, black with a bronze lustre and with testaceous band and spots on elytra (Fig. 1).

Head black with a bronze lustre, labrum and two large spots on vertex testaceous-brown. Antennae testaceous. Reticulation consisting of medium-sized polygonal meshes, irregular in size, with 1–3 small punctures on their inner sides, seldom more, and somewhat larger punctures on some of the intersections. Row alongside eyes, clypeal grooves and grooves beside eyes well impressed, punctures medium-sized and confluent.

Pronotum black, shining with a bronze lustre, very indistinctly ferruginous at sides. Reticulation consisting of polygonal meshes, irregular in size and often

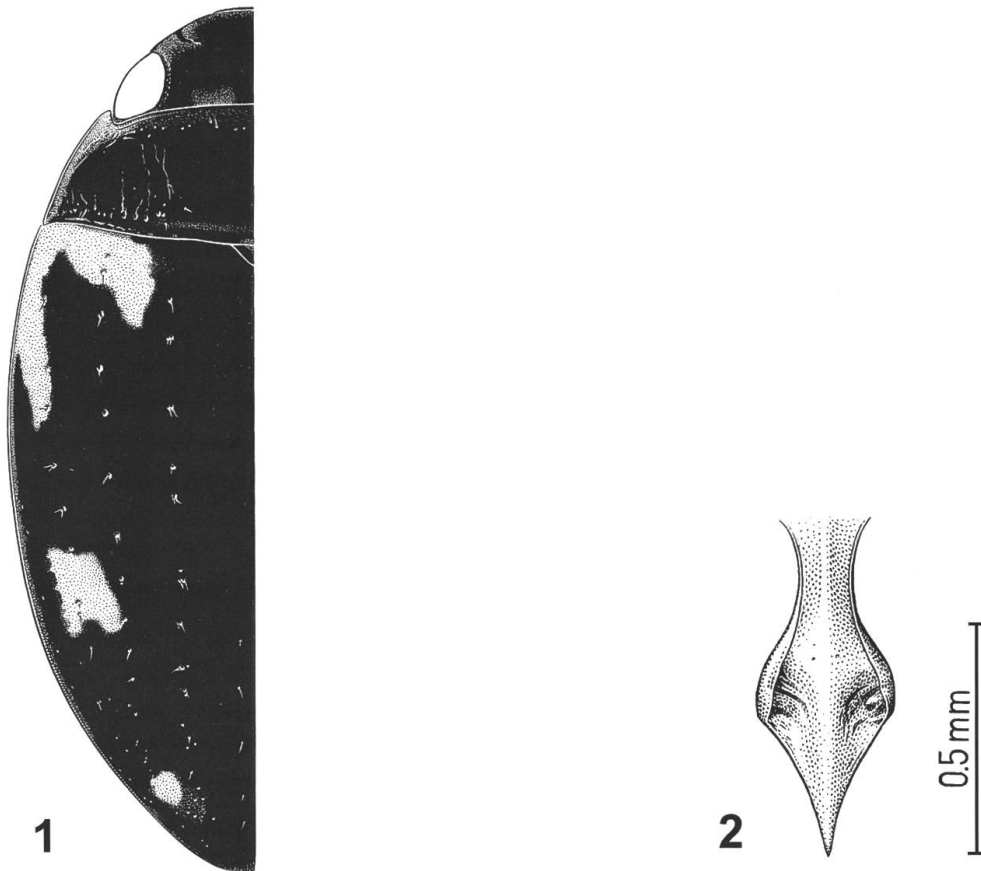
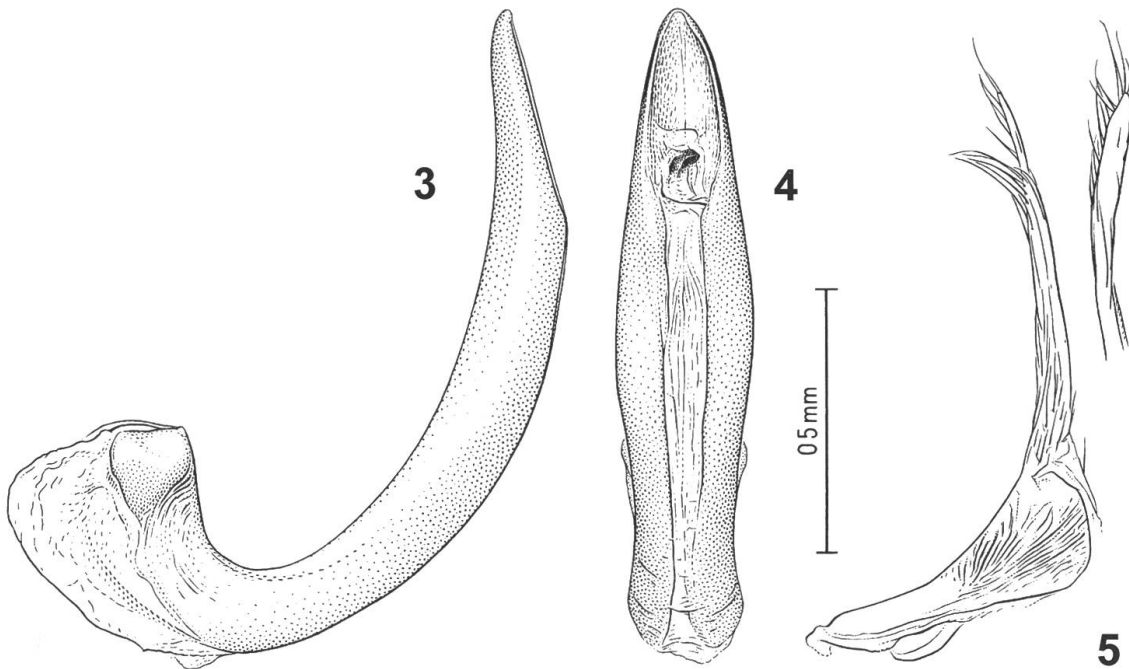


Fig 1–2. *Platambus* (s.str.) *sisouthami* sp.nov.: 1 – habitus, 2 – prosternal process.

incomplete particularly on disc; meshes with 1 to 3 minute punctures, seldom 4, on their inner surfaces and with larger punctures at the intersection of some meshes, somewhat more numerous on disc. Latero-basal part with some deep wrinkles. Anterior row of punctures complete; punctures large, confluent and in groups, leaving small spaces free. Posterior row broadly interrupted at middle; punctures large, not in groups, confluent at sides. Lateral margin distinctly bordered with some punctures alongside the grooves.

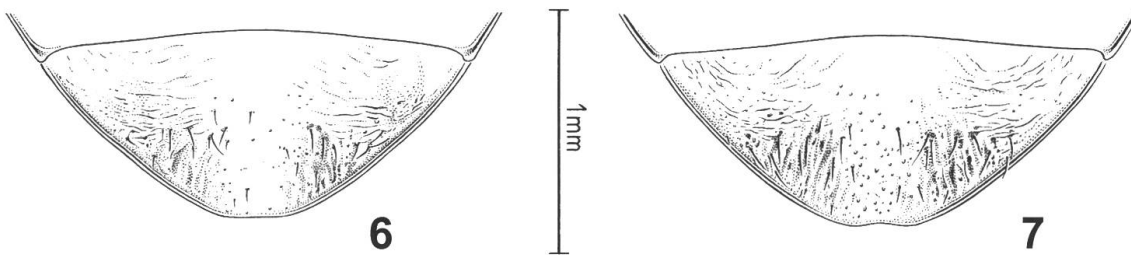
Elytra black with a distinct bronze lustre, with a broad subbasal/lateral band, a large and angular postmedian spot and a preapical spot; in some specimens the lateral band linked with the postmedian spot. Epipleura ferruginous at extreme base, dark brown on the rest of the surface. Reticulation consisting of slightly impressed polygonal meshes, with 1–3 (mostly 2) minute punctures within them and with larger punctures at the intersection of very few meshes. Sutural row of punctures restricted to apical third and consisting of 6 medium-sized well-spaced punctures. Discal, sublateral and lateral rows not reaching base; punctures in well-spaced groups of 2–3 medium-sized and confluent punctures. Epipleura broad at base, rather narrow as far as first sternite and then evenly but slightly tapered as far as apical part.



Figs 3–5. *Platambus* (s.str.) *sisouthami* sp.nov.: 3, aedeagus in lateral view; 4, aedeagus in dorsal view; 5, left paramere (in the sense of MILLER & NILSSON 2003).

Underside dark ferrugineous-brown, hind tibiae and hind tarsi almost black. Prosternal process lanceolate, very broad and broadly bordered on middle part, prolonged into a long and sharp point, medially distinctly convex but not carinate (Fig. 2). Metasternal wings long and narrow. Metacoxae roughly but superficially structured. Metacoxal process with a deep lateral furrow. Metatrochanters elongate, narrowly rounded, finely structured, ending in a blunt point. Metafemora transversely reticulated, without punctures at distal posterior angles. Metatibiae with two rows of punctures; one along outer margin and consisting of 7–9 larger punctures each with a strong but short seta, the other along inner margin, shortened distally with a few small punctures; ground-surface distinctly transversely striolate. Sternites 2, 3 and 4 superficially reticulate with a deep and short row of confluent punctures on the disc bearing longer setae.

♂. Protarsi and mesotarsi distinctly dilated with numerous rounded pads. Anterior claws unequal, the inner one longer, the outer shorter and more slender. Anal sternite microreticulate on anterior third, strongly wrinkled and punctured on posterior half (Fig. 6). Posterior margin distinctly flattened, finely bordered.



Figs 6–7. *Platambus* (s.str.) *sisouthami* sp.nov.: 6, anal sternite ♂; 7, anal sternite ♀.

Aedeagus, in lateral view, regularly curved, broadened at mid-length, then gently tapered in apical part; the dorsal edge truncated (Fig. 3); in dorsal view, it is narrow at base, broadened at apical third, then gently tapered up to apex and narrowly rounded at apex (Fig. 4). Basal part of parameres strongly transverse, apical part 4 times as long as width at base (Fig. 5).

♀. Similar to ♂. Anal sternite superficially reticulate with minute punctures on their inner sides. Both sides of middle on posterior half with a few much larger punctures and with distinct and deep wrinkles (Fig. 7). Posterior margin rounded, flattened on middle and finely bordered, except on median part.

Measurements: Holotype: total length = 6.30 mm, total length *minus* head = 5.70 mm, total width = 3.60 mm. Paratypes (♂ and ♀ do not differ in size): total length = 6.40–6.60 mm (6.37 mm, n = 5), total length *minus* head = 5.80–6.00 mm (5.90, n = 4), total width = 3.50–3.70 mm (3.57, n = 4).

Distribution. NE Laos.

Derivatio nominis. Dedicated to Khampaseuth Sisoutham from Vientiane, our guide in Laos, who has become increasingly interested in our collecting activities and has enabled us to visit the most interesting parts of his country.

Differential diagnosis. This species comes very close to *P. strbai* Hendrich et Balke, 1998 and to *P. incrassatus* Gschwendtner, 1935. From *P. strbai* it can be easily distinguished by its habitus, which is somewhat more elongated, by the less numerous punctures at the intersection of the meshes, by the smaller size (6.3–6.6 mm against 6.6–7.1 mm), and by the aedeagus. The aedeagus in *P. strbai* is not evenly tapered in lateral view and strongly broadened at apex in dorsal view. From *P. incrassatus* it can be distinguished by its larger size (6.3–6.6 mm against 5.4–5.8 mm), by the elytral reticulation which is smaller and more impressed, and by the large punctures at the intersection of the meshes, which are less numerous and distinctly less impressed. The aedeagus is blunt apically in lateral view, whereas it is pointed and sharp in *P. incrassatus*.

***Platambus (s.str) princeps* (Régimbart)**

Platynectes princeps Régimbart, 1888: *Ann. Mus. Civ. Stor. Nat. Genova* 6(2): 615.

Material studied. “NE Laos, Hua Phan prov., Phu Pan Mt, ~20°12'N 104°01'E, 1500–1900m, 17.V.–3.VII.2007, M. Brancucci” (numerous specimens).

This species also seems to be widespread in Laos.

Checklist of *Platambus* species recorded from Laos

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|---|--------------------------|
| <i>P. (s.str.) princeps</i> (Régimbart, 1888) | Prov. Phongsaly, Hua Pan |
| <i>P. (s.str.) incrassatus</i> Gschwendtner, 1935 | Prov. Luang Prabang |
| <i>P. (s.str.) strbai</i> Hendrich et Balke, 1998 | Prov. Luang Namtha |
| <i>P. (s.str.) sisouthami</i> sp.nov. | Prov. Hua Pan |
| <i>P. (Agraphis) regulae</i> Brancucci, 1991 | Prov. Hua Pan |

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Adrian Pont for checking the English of my manuscript and Armin Coray for the illustrations. My thanks also go to the Fritz-Sarasin Foundation and to the Pro Entomologia Foundation for their generous support of my fieldwork in Laos.

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