

A New Lucanid Beetle of the Genus *Aesalus* FABRICIUS (Coleoptera, Lucanidae) from the Himalayas¹⁾

By

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Abstract A new lucanid beetle of the genus *Aesalus* FABRICIUS, 1801, is described from the Singalila Dara on the borders between East Nepal and West Bengal. The new species is closer to European *A. scarabaeoides* (PANZER, 1794) than to such East Asian species as *A. asiaticus* LEWIS, 1883, and *A. imanishii* INAHARA et RATTI, 1981.

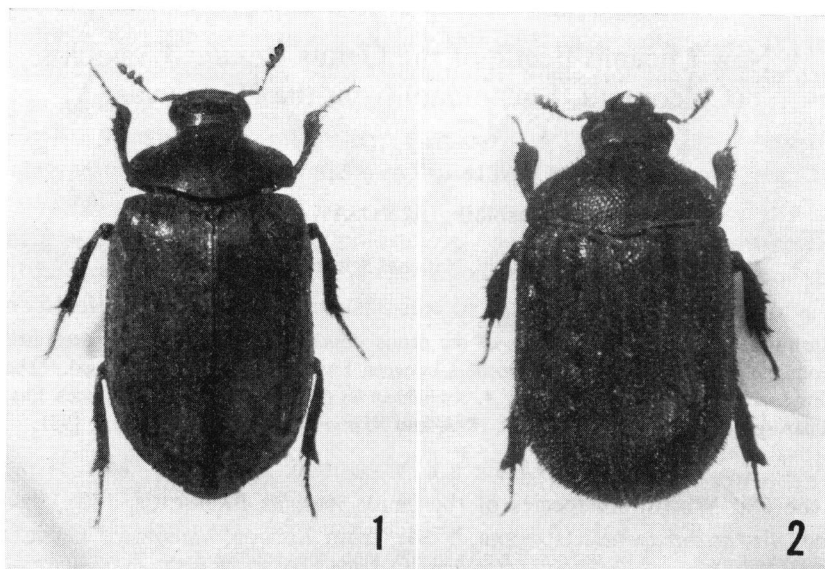
In the Old World, six species of the genus *Aesalus* FABRICIUS, 1801, have been described, viz. *scarabaeoides* (PANZER, 1794), from Europe, *ulanowskii* GANGLBAUER, 1886, from Caucasus, *daghestanicus* DIDIER et SÉGUY, 1953, from Daghestan (Caucasus), *timidus* KRIKKEN, 1974, from Sumatra, *imanishii* INAHARA et RATTI, 1981, from Formosa, and *asiaticus* LEWIS, 1883, from Japan. Of these six species, *A. timidus* KRIKKEN, 1974, from Sumatra, may represent a genus different from true *Aesalus* FABRICIUS, and the distributional range of the latter seems to be restricted to the temperate zone of Eurasia. It is strange that none of true *Aesalus* have hitherto been known from the Asian Continent between Europe and Caucasus and such fringing islands of East Asia as Japan and Formosa. The new species, which will be described in the following lines, is important in filling the blank between the European species and the East Asian ones. It is expected that some interesting species belonging to this peculiar lucanid genus may be found in China in future.

Aesalus himalayicus sp. nov.

(Figs. 1, 3)

Female. Similar to European *A. scarabaeoides* (PANZER, 1794) (Fig. 2), but differs from it in the following points: 1) Body slenderer, with slenderer antennae and legs; 2) head smaller, narrower, with ocular ridge arcuate and covering the anterior fourth of each eye, while in *scarabaeoides*, the ridge is very short and hardly covers the eye; 3) punctures of head weaker and smaller; 4) mandibles slenderer, each with a sharp slenderer interior dentation; 5) antennae slenderer, with the second segment subconical, about 1.5 times as long as wide, the third slenderer, about 3 times as long as wide, the fourth about as long as wide, the fifth slightly wider than long, the sixth less than twice as wide as long, the seventh more than twice as wide as long, and the apical three segments

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Figs. 1-2. Dorsal aspects of the female of *Aesalus himalayicus* Y. KUROSAWA, sp. nov. (1) and *A. scarabaeoides* (PANZER, 1794) (2).

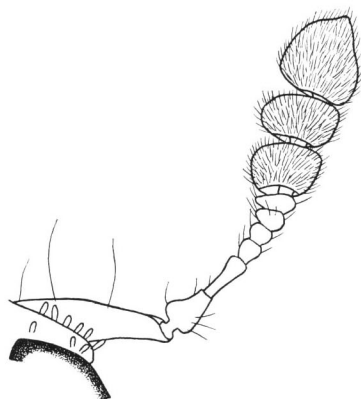


Fig. 3. Right antenna of *Aesalus himalayicus* Y. KUROSAWA, sp. nov.

from the eighth strongly dilated interiorly and forming a club; 6) scale-like clavate setae of pronotum and elytra shorter and sparser, with the masses of them on elytra arranged on lines smaller and less distinct; 7) pronotum narrower, widest near the middle, with the sides more strongly rounded, swollen and slightly sinuate just behind anterior angles; 8) punctures on pronotum and elytra weaker, smaller and somewhat inconspicuous; 9) elytral longitudinal striae inconspicuous, with the interstices uniform, not elevated; 10) legs slenderer; 11) outer margin of each anterior tibia with two denta-

tions among densely beset bristles, but not irregularly serrate as in *scarabaeoides*; 12) tarsi slenderer and longer, and more densely covered with long greyish hairs; 13) prosternal process broader, not constricted by anterior coxal cavities and not dilated apically; 14) punctures on ventral surface sparser.

Length: 6.4–7.5 mm; width: 3.3–3.5 mm.

Range. Himalayas.

Holotype and paratopotypes: 4 ♀♀, Kalapokhri, 3,000 m, Singalila Dara, E. Nepal, 2. x. 1984, Y. NISHIKAWA lgt.

The type series was obtained by Mr. Y. NISHIKAWA from decayed logs at Kalapokhri at an altitude of 3,000 m. There are two other damaged specimens from Central Nepal and West Bengal obtained by Mr. M. SAKAI from decayed logs. The data of them are as follows: 1 ♀, Thakam, 3,350 m, Singalila Dara, 4. x. 1983, M. SAKAI lgt.; 1 ♀, Deorali, 3,200 m–Kuldi, 2,800 m, near the basecamp of Mt. Machhapuchhare, C. Nepal, 20. x. 1981, M. SAKAI lgt.

The holotype and two paratopotypes are preserved in the collection of the National Science Museum, Tokyo, and a paratopotype will be presented to the British Museum (Natural History).

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