

Nomenclatural note on the genus *Moissonia* Reuter (Hemiptera, Miridae, Phyllinae)

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The taxonomic position of the genus *Moissonia* Reuter is discussed. *Ellenia* Reuter, *Marshalliella* Poppius, and *Melanotrichiella* Poppius are junior synonyms of *Moissonia*. *Marshalliella obscuricornis* Poppius and *Psallus labeculus* Odhiambo are synonyms of *Moissonia punctata* (Fieber).

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The article is based on field work made by the senior author in 1992 in the Republic of Yemen. A zoogeographically interesting synonymy between the genera *Moissonia* Reuter and *Ellenia* Reuter was detected.

Moissonia Reuter, 1894

Moissonia Reuter 1894:148. Type species: *Agalliaestes punctatus* Fieber.

Ellenia Reuter 1910:168. Type species: *Capsus cuneatus* Stål, syn. n.

Marshalliella Poppius 1914:75. Type species: *M. obscuricornis* Poppius, syn. n.

Melanotrichiella Poppius 1914:80. Type species: *M. annulicornis* Poppius, syn. n.

Reuter (1894:148) described the genus *Moissonia* with *Agalliaestes punctatus* Fieber as the type species. The genus has remained enigmatic ever since. Wagner (1975:65–66), for example, misinterpreted the claw structure (Fig. 1b) regarding the fleshy parempodia as pulvilli, and located the genus close to *Campylomma* Reuter with which it is not actually related. *Moissonia punctata* was formerly known only from Spain (Malaga and Alicante) and Algeria (Oran). Prof. Attilio Cara-

pezza, Palermo, recently found the species in Sicily and kindly sent us several specimens. An examination of these surprisingly revealed that *Moissonia* is identical with the well-known intertropical genus *Ellenia* Reuter. The type species *M. punctata* is even a senior synonym of the common East African species *E. obscuricornis* (Poppius), which is distributed from South Africa to Ethiopia and Yemen, and, undoubtedly during the Pluvial period along the Red Sea hills, even to the Mediterranean area. The genera *Marshalliella* Poppius and *Melanotrichiella* Poppius were declared synonyms of *Ellenia* in Carvalho 1952:76 and Linnavuori 1973:89–90 and 1975:87.

M. punctata (Fieber, 1861)

Fig. 1a

Agalliaestes punctatus Fieber 1861:311.

Moissonia punctata Reuter 1894:148.

Marshalliella obscuricornis Poppius 1914:76, syn. n.

Psallus labeculus Odhiambo 1959:518–521, syn. n. (synonymized with *Marshalliella obscuricornis* in Linnavuori 1973:90).

Material studied: Ethiopia: Sululta, 2 exx, 11.VI.1963, Linnavuori. Yemen: Sana'a, 1 ex, VII–IX.1991, A. van

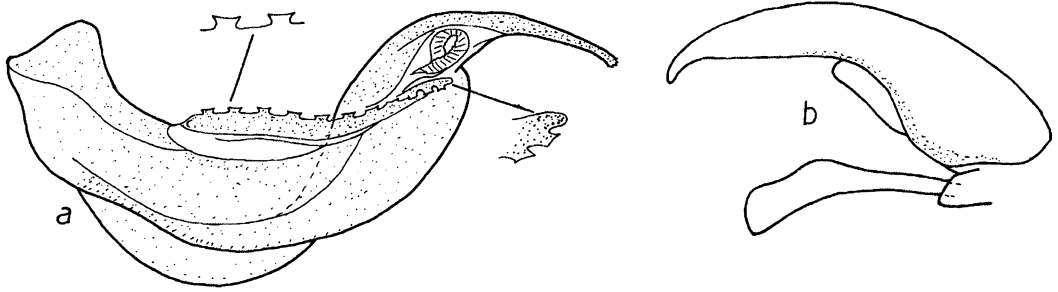


Fig. 1. *Moissonia punctata* (Fieber): a) vesica (ex from Sana'a). — *M. kilimana* (Poppius): b) claw.

Harten. Italy: Sicily, Etna, Rif. Sapienza, alt. 1600 m, several exx, 24.VII.1990, A. Carapezza.

Redescription in Schuh 1974:158–159. Vesica illustrated in Fig. 1a.

Biology: Undoubtedly restricted to the Compositae genus *Senecio*. Schuh found it on *Senecio burchelli* and *S. angustifolius* in South Africa, Carapezza on *S. aetnensis* in Sicily.

Distribution: East African. A common species in South and East Africa.

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