

A NEW SPECIES OF *MERISTA* CHAPUIS (1895) (INSECTA :
COLEOPTERA : CHRYSOMELIDAE) FROM INDIA

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(With 1 text-figure)

I—INTRODUCTION

In the material collected by my colleagues Dr. K. C. Jayaram and Shri S. Biswas, from Kameng Division of North East Frontier Agency and Assam are present a few insects of genus *Merista* Chapuis (Coleoptera : Chrysomelidae : Gallerucinae). These specimens apparently belong to a hitherto unknown species, which is described below. This species is named after its first collector.

II—DESCRIPTION

Merista jayarami sp. n.

Material.—4603/H4A Holotype (♂), N.E.F.A. : Kameng Div. : Bomko, 10. v. 1961, (Coll. K. C. Jayaram).

Paratypes: 4604/H4A, 1 example, same particulars as holotype ; N.E.F.A. : Kameng Div. : 4605/H4A, 1 example, Bomdila 30. vi. 1961 ; 4606/H4A, 1 example, Moshing, 3, vi. 1961 ; 4607/H4A, 1 example, 6. vi. 1961 ; 4608/H4A — 4609/H4A, 2 examples, Nyukmadong Village, 21. iv. 1961 ; 4610/H4A — 4611/H4A, 2 examples, Naphra, 26. vi. 1961 (all Coll. K. C. Jayaram) 4612/H4A — 4614/H4A 3 examples, Naphra, But, 4-6. viii. 1961 (Coll. S. Biswas).

All the types are deposited in the National Zoological Collection, Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta.

Body elongate ovate, pronotum deeply metallic blue, each elytron with two violet transverse maculae, antennae with basal segment metallic blue-black and the rest dull black, legs of deep violet to black colour.

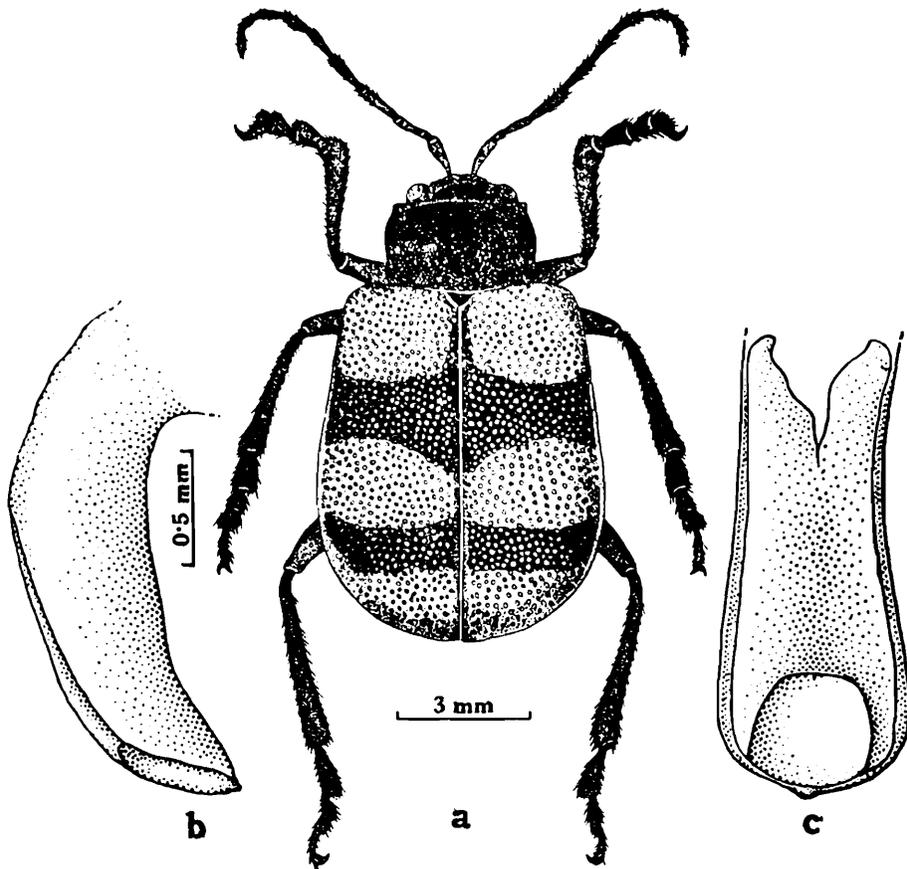
Head metallic green-blue ; surface somewhat rugose ; a longitudinal impression between the base of antennae ; on the frons a deep fovea surrounded by four small tubercles ; antennae long and slender, extending well beyond the middle of elytra, the basal segments at least equal to the second and third segments combined together, second segment very short, fourth segment longer than third, fifth segment smaller than fourth, segments fifth to eighth subequal, ninth and tenth segments more slender than preceding segments and subequal, apical segment a little longer and more slender than tenth.

Pronotum metallic blue with the sides narrowly margined, anterior angles produced a little, surface uneven, with a few scattered punctures.

Scutellum triangular, of the same colour as pronotum, impunctate.

Elytra pale reddish-brown, with two transverse moderately broad (breadth somewhat variable) deep violet metallic coloured maculae, one antemedian and other postmedian, a very narrow deep violet metallic coloured stripe along the suture ; punctures moderate and well impressed, almost regularly arranged but not striate, on the disc separated by 1-1½ times their own diameter.

Ventral side generally black, abdominal sternites with the sides reddish brown, legs deep violet to black; metasternum with a few and fine transverse striations, punctures very fine, few and scattered; abdominal sternites with transverse striations more impressed, punctures fine, scattered, and with small hair; tibiae with golden pubescence on the inner side getting denser from base to apex.



TEXT-FIG. 1. *Merista jayarami* (a) dorsal view of Holotype, (b) aedeagus—lateral view of Paratype, (c) aedeagus—dorsal view of Paratype.

Aedeagus (Text-fig. 1 *b, c*) with the median lobe tubular, moderately inflexed on the dorsal side, broadened a little from the middle to the subrounded apex; on the dorsal side progressively and regularly depressed (forming a dorsal concavity) up to and around the median foramen (gonopore), ventral side rather flattened towards the apex; internal sac membranous, without visible sclerotised armature.

Length 9.0—12.0 mm. *Breadth* 5.5—6.7 mm.

Remarks.—This species comes near to *M. sexmaculata* (Kollar & Redtenbacher), found in E. & W. Himalaya, Sikkim and Orissa, in the deep violet-blue-black colouration but differs from it in having (i) abdominal sternites black, with the sides reddish brown as against uniformly black, (ii) elytra having only two transverse maculae of deep violet metallic colour against three such maculae, (iii) scutellum smaller in size and (iv) pronotum without longitudinal striae.

III—SUMMARY

A new species of *Merista* Chapuis from the Kameng Frontier Division, N.E.F.A. is described in this paper.