

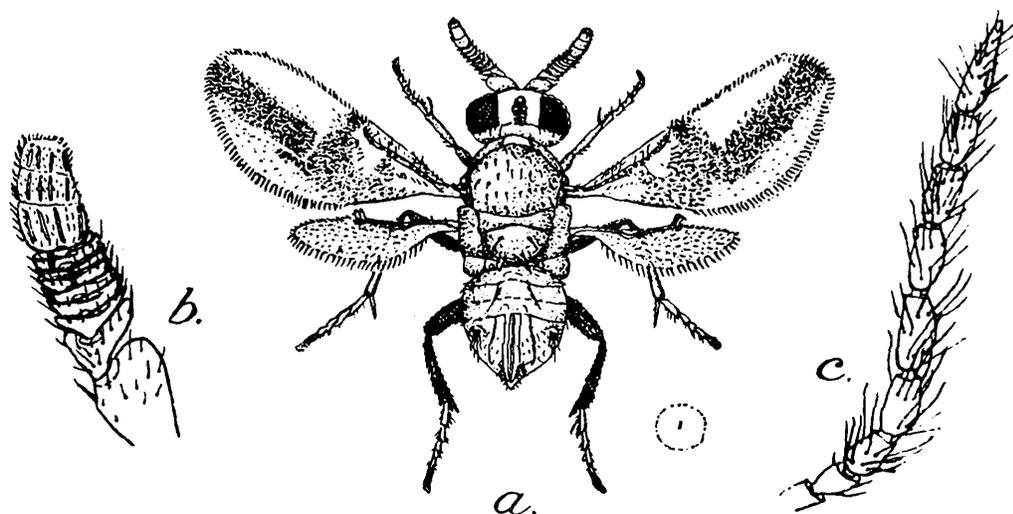
# FIRST RECORD OF THE CHALCID GENUS *COMPERIELLA* HOWARD FROM INDIA WITH A DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES.

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The genus *Comperiella* was established by L. O. Howard (3) in 1906 to include an extremely interesting Chalcid wasp collected by the famous parasite hunter George Compere from China, with *C. bifasciata* as the type-species. Since then three more species of this genus have been described: *C. pia* from Australia by Girault in 1915, *C. cerapterocera* by Mercet from Spain in 1921 and *C. unifasciata* by Ishi from Japan in 1925. The genus has not been recorded from India so far. A couple of years ago, while engaged in bionomic and systematic studies on South Indian scale-insects and their parasites, the author came across a wasp bred from a diaspine scale-insect which on examination was provisionally regarded as a *Comperiella*. For want of time and sufficient material at the time further examination of the insect was left in abeyance though a record of it was included in the author's bulletin (1) on Coccidae in 1930. Recently the study was taken up on further material becoming available and on comparison with the description of the three previously recorded forms the Indian form was found to belong to a new species; this was confirmed by an authority on the group, Mr. H. Compere of California, who recently visited Coimbatore. The species is described below under the name *C. indica*, sp. nov.

## *Comperiella indica*, sp. nov.

Female (text-fig. a) length from head to tip of abdomen 1.034 mm.; including the wing which extends behind body 1.43 mm. General



*Comperiella indica* sp. nov.

- a. Complete insect, female, seen from above.
- b. Antenna of female.
- c. Antenna of male.

colour light to dark brown. Eyes dark; funicular joints of antennae and dorsolateral region of base of abdomen deep brown. In certain lights the frontovertex between the eyes shows a shining creamy colour with a narrow, long brown streak over the ocellar region behind; the median region of the pronotum shows a similar shining patch and the mesoscutum is iridescent with a greenish metallic colour. Ocelli with some reddish pigment. Legs—in the two front pairs of legs, femora, extreme basal region and the narrow margins of tibiae concolorous with body, greater portion of tibiae, spur and all tarsal joints except last of a whitish yellow colour. Femora and tibiae of hind legs and last tarsal joint uniform deep dark brown; only basal tarsal joints whitish yellow. Wings hyaline. There is only one conspicuous brownish fascia in the fore-wings arising near the middle of the wing and extending to the wing apex; there is a slight indication of a rudimentary lower fascia just at the base of upper divided by a narrow indistinct hyaline region. Head broader than long. Eyes large, ocelli forming an acute-angled triangle; surface of ocellar region beautifully polygonal. Antennae well developed. In most other features this species resembles the geno-type *C. bifasciata*, H.

Male—smaller than female, a little less than 1 mm. long. The antennae of male (text-fig. *c*) are quite different in structure from those of the female (text-fig. *b*); the funicular joints are long and fringed with long curved hairs. Abdomen short, smaller than thorax. Wings without any brownish fascia as in female.

Described from half a dozen females and from males bred as parasites from the tamarind scale *Aspidiotus tamarindi* G. on the Coimbatore farm. This scale is often a serious pest of tamarind—the foliage and occasionally the fruits being completely covered with colonies of this scale and *Aspidiotus orientalis* N.

Type ♀ in the collections of the Zoological Survey of India (Indian Museum), Calcutta, No. 869/H 3.

The main differences between this Indian species and the previously recorded forms are shown in the following key as a supplement to the table published by Compere (2) :—

- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Fore-wings of female with two divergent brownish fasciae.                      |                               |
| <i>a.</i> Colour dark bluish black  | <i>C. bifasciata</i> Howard.  |
| <i>b.</i> Colour blue   | <i>C. ceraptocera</i> Mercet. |
| <i>c.</i> Colour dark brownish to metallic green                                  | <i>C. pia</i> Girault.        |
| 2. Fore-wings of female with two parallel brownish fasciae                        | <i>C. unifasciata</i> Ishi.   |
| 3. Fore-wings of female with only one brownish fascia; colour light to dark brown | <i>C. indica</i> , sp. nov.   |

The striking difference between these species is to be found in the infuscation of the fore-wing.

All the known species are natives of the Eastern Hemisphere and the majority are from the Oriental region. It is not unlikely that further studies may lead to the discovery of other species in this region.

As a beneficial insect *C. bifasciata* H. was transported from Japan and China into California in 1922 as biological control against citrus-scales of the genus *Chrysomphalus*.

LITERATURE.

1. Ayyar, T. V. Ramakrishna.—A contribution to our knowledge of S. Indian Coccidae. Bulletin No. 197, Pusa, 1929.
2. Compere, H.—New Coccid inhabiting parasites. *California University Ent. Publication*, IV(2), 1926.
3. Howard, L. O.—An interesting new genus and species of Encyrtidae. *Entomological News*, 1906.