

**TINODEMUS MIFSUDI SP. N. (COLEOPTERA, PHALACRIDAE) FROM MALTA**Zdeněk Švec<sup>1</sup>**ABSTRACT**

*Tinodemus mifsudi* sp. n. from Malta is described. The genus *Tinodemus* Guillebeau, 1894 is recorded from Europe for the first time. Systematic position of the genus *Tinodemus* is briefly indicated. *Stilbus polygramma* Flach, 1888 is transferred to the genus *Tinodemus*.

**INTRODUCTION**

Since 1894 when Guillebeau erected the genus *Tinodemus* describing and designating the type species *T. grouvellei* Guillebeau, 1894 no data or additional information on the genus was published. Through the kindness of David Mifsud (Basel), I had an opportunity to study a collection of Phalacridae from the Maltese Islands. Among the material, there were three specimens not belonging to any of the hitherto known Old World genera. I identified these as a species belonging to the genus *Tinodemus* Guillebeau, 1894. To date, four described species from South America are included in the genus *Tinodemus*. The African species of the genus are currently under revision.

**RESULTS**

According to present knowledge, the genus *Tinodemus* should be placed in the subfamily Phalacrinae. The examination of the type species - *Tinodemus grouvellei* Guillebeau, 1894 showed strong affinity to the genus *Stilbus* Seidlitz, 1872 and its allies. At least four genera - *Stilbus*, *Tinodemus*, *Nesiotus* Guillebeau, 1896 and *Podoces* Guillebeau, 1894 seem to be forming a group sharing important characters, mainly the similar meso- and metasternal structures, length ratios of segments of hind tarsi, presence of metasternal lines and shape of the ultimate segment of maxillary palpi.

The relationship between the above mentioned genera will be discussed in the forthcoming work reviewing the African species of the genus *Tinodemus*.

*Tinodemus polygramma* (Flach, 1888); **comb. n.**

*Stilbus polygramma* Flach, 1888: 75

*Stilbus polygramma*, Švec, 1992: 435

**Distribution** Algeria, Egypt, Italy including Sicily, Spain (Gibraltar), Israel, Syria and Turkey. *T. polygramma rubidus* (Flach, 1889) was described from Japan.

**Remarks** The examination of the type species of the genus *Tinodemus* showed that *Stilbus polygramma* agreed with all generic characters of *Tinodemus*, mainly, the shape of metasternal lines and aedeagus. Therefore the species is here transferred to the genus *Tinodemus*.

*Tinodemus mifsudi* sp. n.

**TYPE MATERIAL**

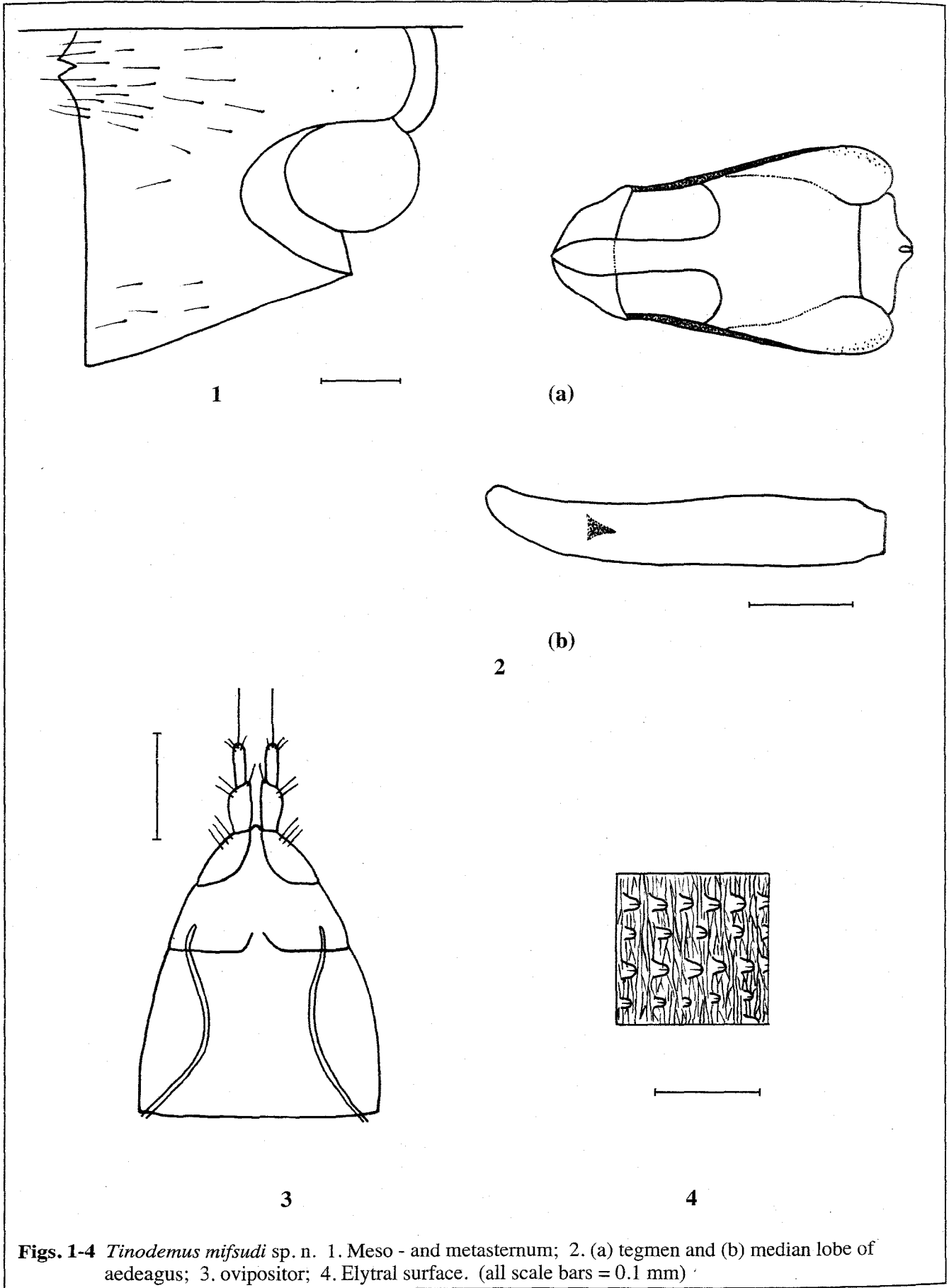
Holotype, ♂, MALTA, Bahrija, 16.vii.1997, leg. D. Mifsud; paratypes, 1 ♀, same data as holotype; 1 ♀, MALTA, Bahrija, 24.vii.1997, leg. D. Mifsud.

The holotype is deposited in the collection of the Naturhistorisches Museum, Basel, the paratypes in Mifsud's and Švec's collections.

**DESCRIPTION**

Length of body 1.4 - 1.5 mm, in holotype 1.4 mm, head 0.1 mm, pronotum 0.4 mm, elytra 0.9 mm, antenna 0.4 mm, maximal width of head 0.5 mm, pronotum 0.8 mm at base, elytra 0.8 mm just behind base.

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**Figs. 1-4** *Tinodemus mifsudi* sp. n. 1. Meso- and metasternum; 2. (a) tegmen and (b) median lobe of aedeagus; 3. ovipositor; 4. Elytral surface. (all scale bars = 0.1 mm)

Body oblong oval, shiny, dorsum dark brown, clypeus red-brown, elytra gradually lighter with red-brown posterior half. Legs, antennae and mouthparts yellow. Venter reddish yellow.

**Head.** Without microsculpture. Finely and sparsely punctured. Punctures spaced by 6-8 or more times their own diameters.

Length ratios of antennal segments 2-11 in holotype (segment 2 equal to 1.0): 1.0 - 0.6 - 0.4 - 0.4 - 0.4 - 0.4 - 0.4 - 0.9 - 0.8 - 1.6. The same ratios of width: 1.0 - 0.5 - 0.5 - 0.5 - 0.5 - 0.5 - 0.7 - 1.3 - 1.3 - 1.5. The same ratios of width:length of antennal segments 2-11: 0.8 - 0.6 - 1.0 - 1.0 - 1.0 - 1.0 - 1.3 - 1.1 - 1.3 - 0.7. Segments of antennal club very feebly asymmetric..

**Pronotum.** Without microsculpture. Finely, sparsely and irregularly punctured. Punctures separated by about 6-10 or more times their own diameters. Puncturing denser and more distinct postero-laterally. Base feebly bordered at its middle third. Posterior angles slightly sharp with closely rounded tip in dorsal view; slightly blunt closely rounded in lateral view.

**Scutellum.** Without puncturation; smooth.

**Elytra.** Widest just behind shoulders; gradually roundly narrowed posteriorly. Both lateral margins simultaneously invisible in dorsal view. Area between anterior margin of elytra and basal line running from shoulders to scutellum covered by oblique strigosites.

All elytral surface microsculptured, with transverse very long narrow cells. Sutural stria reaching anterior third of elytral length. Interval between suture and sutural stria flatly raised. With distinct regular rows of widely opened E-shaped punctures disappearing toward base becoming simply pointed on anterior quarter of elytral length. E-punctures become shallower and wider resembling transverse wrinkles with short central setae posteriorly and laterally. Wrinkle-shaped lateral and distal punctures connecting in some places with their lateral neighbors. Each interval with row of smaller punctures similar to those in primary rows. Discal E-

shaped punctures of primary rows separated transversely by about 1 times their own diameter from punctures of interval rows and by about 0.75 times their own diameter longitudinally (Fig. 4). Smaller and sparser punctures of interval rows spaced by about 2 times their own diameter longitudinally.

**Prosternal process.** Sharply edged posteriorly.

**Meso- and metasternum.** As in Fig. 1.

**Legs.** Anterior tibiae with two closely standing spurs latero-distally. Segments 2 and 3 of anterior tarsi slightly widened in male. Middle tibiae distinctly curved; hind tibiae straight.

**Genitalia.** Male genitalia as in Figs 2a, 2b. Ovipositor as in Fig. 3.

**Variability.** Pronotum brown; elytra gradually lighter with posterior third of their length red-brown in paratypes.

**Differential diagnosis.** *Tinodemus mifsudi* sp. n. is similar to *T. polygramma* (Flach, 1888) sharing the well developed elytral rows of E-punctures. It differs by punctures of interval rows smaller than those in primary rows while interval punctures are of the same size in *T. polygramma*.

The male genitalia of the two species are also distinctly different.

**Derivatio nominis.** The species is named after its collector.

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