

The female *Transvaaliana draconis* BROWN,
1962 described (Acridoidea: Phamphagidae: Porthetinae).

by
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Abstract: Description with figures of female of the South African *Transvaaliana draconis*, with differential diagnosis. Key to species of the genus. Supplementary measurements of males. New records from Transvaal and Cape Prov..

In material received for determination from Department of Entomology, University of Pretoria were two males of *Transvaaliana draconis*. This species is recognized from the males of the other species in this genus by the long tegmina, nearly reaching the apex of abdomen (BROWN 1962). Previously only the male holotype of *T. draconis* was known. The material also contain two females which must be conspecific with *T. draconis*.

The type locality of the species is Republic of South Africa, Natal, Bergville District, Little Switzerland. The two males in the material dealt with originate from Natal, Fort Louis, SE 2830, Bd (J.W.A. leg.) and from Cape Province, Clanwilliam, SE 3218 Bb (P. du TOIT leg.). They are both somewhat smaller than the holotype, namely: length of body 27,3 - 29,5, of pronotum 14,2 - 14,5, of tegmen 15,5 - 15,9 and of hind femur 15,4 - 15,8mm but this variation is not larger than in several other species of *Porthetinae*.

The two females (Fig. 1-6), previously undescribed, came from Transvaal: Pretoria (the neo-allotype) and from Ermelo, east of Johannesburg, SE 2629 Db (L.E. VAN WYK leg.). Thus the known distribution of the species is extended from Natal to Transvaal and Cape Province. The months of capture were January, February and April.

Description of female neo-allotype:

Integument granulose; in upper part of pronotal meso- and metazona also with spines; the hind margin of metazona with series of tiny spines. Frontal ridge narrow but its lateral carinae not united below medial ocellus.

Lateral carinulae of the deeply concave fastigium of vertex not notched above compound eye. Antennae with fine longitudinally impressed striae on the middle joints.

Crest of pronotum a little less convex than in male, not serrated, in profile regularly excurved, with a tiny fork at posterior end. The fenestrae feebly impressed, when illuminated from opposite side small and narrow. Prosternal process bilobate (somewhat asymmetrical) without posterior tubercles.

Hind femur less robust than in the other species, its ratio length to depth 3.6, its herring-bone pattern of outer medial area somewhat irregular; the upper margin of hind femur developed more like a serration than with a row of spines (as in the other species), the anterior profile of serrations generally pointing more caudad than in the other species, where the spines are more erect or pointing obliquely upward. Lower margin of hind femur with very few and irregular undulations, but none of these could be designated as spines.

Hind tibia dorso-ventrally somewhat curved, with 10 -11 outer spines and 9 - 10 inner spines, the outer ones more flat than the inner ones, and, in lateral view, with much wider bases than the inner ones.

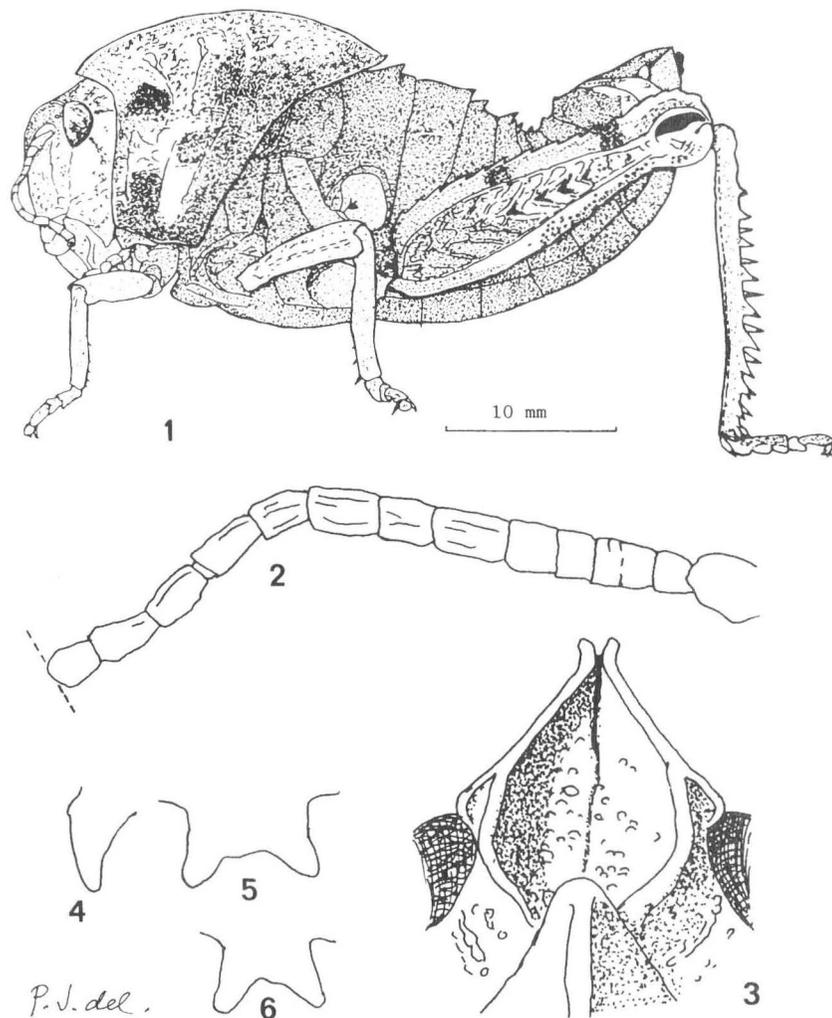
Measurements: Length of body (upcurved and shrunk) 39, of pronotum 17,7 and of hind femur 21,1 mm.

General coloration brownish. Head pale brownish. Dorsal pale yellowish line along crest of pronotum; the pronotum otherwise with the usual porrhethine design of paler sections between darker patches in prozona; lower part of lateral lobe and most of metazona dark brown. The abdomen marbled in dark brown and reddish brown; the tergites VIII-X with paler - almost whitish - patches laterally. Appendages generally paler than body, hind femur basally darker than in posterior part; lunula of knee region black on both sides, the inner medial area with herring-bone pattern in dark grey, the interspaces between this pattern white.

Supplementary description of female:

The other female (from Ermelo) in the material is different from the neo-allotype in the presence of a callous, longitudinal and yellowish, interrupted line on pronotum behind the eye and continuing on to metanotum and

Figs. 1-6. *Trasvaaliana draconis*, female. 1: Habitus. 2: Left antenna, dorsal view; apical joint(s) missing. 3: Fastigium of vertex, dorsal view. 4: Prosternal process, lateral view from left side. 5-6: Prosternal process, anterior view, variation. (1,3,4, and 5 neo-allotype).



terga I-IV of abdomen. This callous line is hardly noticeable in the neo-allotype but never-the-less traceable on pronotum and metanotum but its colour is not different from that of the background. The hind femur is without the basal adumbration of neo-allotype, and its herring-bone pattern of outer medial area is more irregular. In spite of these differences the two specimens are considered conspecific. Its size is somewhat smaller: length of body (upcurved, shrunk) 34, of pronotum 17.2 and of hind femur 20.2 mm.

Differential diagnosis.

Five species of *Transvaaliana* have been described: *distanti* (SAUSSURE, 1892), *picta* (SAUSSURE, 1892), *granulosa* (KIRBY, 1902), *draconis* BROWN 1962 and *striata* JOHNSEN 1971.

The female *draconis* is different from female *distanti* and *picta* in the lack of proper spines on lower margin of hind femur, from *picta* also different in the lack of serration in posterior part of pronotal crest. Female *draconis* is different from female *granulosa* in the more excurved pronotal crest and in the upper margin of hind femur, with serration, not with erect spines as in *granulosa*. Furthermore in the straight profile of lateral carinulae of fastigium of vertex also in the region above compound eye (not irregular or notched as in *granulosa* and *picta*). When describing *striata* only male was available (JOHNSEN, 1971). It is possible that this taxon represent the male of *picta* - only known from the unique female type - with a trilobate prosternal process (*bilobate* in all other species, including *striata*). I have seen a *Transvaaliana* (from Univ. Pretoria), much defect and missing hind legs, with pronotal crest serrated and with a notch in fastigial carinulae above the eye i.e. as in *picta*, but it has a bilobate prosternal process. Until further material is available for study it is impossible to know if the trilobate process used as a key character by DIRSH (1958) to recognize *picta* is really a permanent character of specific value, or just an abnormal development in the female type of *picta*. In case *striata* should remain a valid taxon it is most likely that its female would also possess a serrate pronotal crest and erect spines on the margins of hind femur and in these ways be different from the female *draconis*.

Key to females of *Transvaaliana* DIRSH, 1958:

- 1. Crest of pronotum slightly serrated in metazona.....*picta*

- Crest of pronotum not serrated in metazona.....2
- 2. Lower margin of hind femur without proper spines, but with irregular undulations or tiny lobes.....3
- Lower margin of hind femur with at least some proper spines*distanti*
- 3. Pronotal crest less excurved (ratio length to height about 7.2). Upper margin of hind femur with erect spines.....*granulosa*
- Pronotal crest more excurved (ratio length to height about 5.7). Upper margin of hind femur serrated, but not with erect spines.....*draconis*

References

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