

Entomologica Basiliensia	24	321–325	2002	ISSN 0253–24834
--------------------------	----	---------	------	-----------------

## A redescription of *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896, with notes on synonymy (Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae, Eumolpinae)

by Stefano Zoia

**Abstract.** A redescription of the leaf beetle *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (Chrysomelidae: Eumolpinae) is given after examination of two syntypes and other material. The following generic and specific synonymies are proposed: *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896 (= *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897 syn.nov.), *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 [= *Pseudomalegia donckieri* (PIC, 1904) syn.nov., comb.nov.]. New combinations in *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896 are provided for the species previously assigned to the genus *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897: *Lahejia fulvipes* (JACOBY, 1898) comb.nov., *L. lefevrei* (JACOBY, 1897) comb.nov., *L. minuta* (WEISE, 1919) comb.nov., *L. schimperi* (LEFÈVRE, 1891) comb.nov., *L. tibialis* (JACOBY, 1901) comb.nov., *L. turkestanica* (REITTER, 1890) comb.nov.

**Key words.** Chrysomelidae – Eumolpinae – *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896 – *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897 – new synonymies – new combinations

In 1896 Gahan described the eumolpine genus *Lahejia* for the new species *L. cinerascens* collected by R. A. Yerbury in “Aden and the surrounding district” (GAHAN 1896). This genus has not been addressed since and at present no other species are ascribed to *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896.

The genus *Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897 includes seven species distributed from the Southern Urals and Turkestan, through Arabia, to South Africa and Angola. No valuable characters appear to separate its type species (*P. lefevrei* JACOBY, 1897) and other six species from *L. cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (type species of *Lahejia*) at genus level. Moreover, one species of *Pseudomalegia* is synonymised: PIC (1904b) described *Malegia donckieri* PIC, 1904, later transferred to *Pseudomalegia* (DACCORDI 1983), which now appears to be conspecific with the original Gahan’s species.

### *Lahejia* GAHAN, 1896

Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. **18**: 459.

**Type species:** *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (by monotypy).

*Pseudomalegia* JACOBY, 1897: 546; **syn.nov.** (type species: *P. lefevrei* JACOBY, 1897; by monotypy).

**Description.** Body elongate, pubescent; wings well developed; antennal club not strongly enlarged; eyes prominent, oval, large; mandibles strong; head prognathous, pronotum a little wider than long, obviously much narrower than the elytra, the base narrower, or as wide as, the distal margin; lateral margins of pronotum obsolete; anterior border of prosternum concave; scutellum small, oblong; elytra obviously longer than wide, with sides moderately convex, parallel in the anterior half, irregularly punctate; epipleura narrow, a little widened proximally; legs moderately long, weak; femora moderately thickened; tibiae not emarginate preapically; third tarsomere widely bilobed;

claws bifid; prosternum longer than wide (width/length ratio 1/6); mesosternum longer than wide (width/length ratio 2/6); metasternum, in the middle, a little longer than the mesosternum; fore coxal cavities closed; pygidium without a median groove.

**Notes.** *Lahejia* is strictly related to the genus *Malegia* LEFÈVRE, 1883, from which it differs in the lack of emargination at the preapical part of the mesotibiae.

### *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896

*Malegia donckieri* PIC, 1904: L'Échange **20(233)**: 36. **syn.nov.** [not examined]

*Pseudomalegia donckieri*: DACCORDI (1983): 225.

**Material examined.** Syntype ♀ labelled as follow: SYNTYPE (round printed label with light-blue margin), TYPE (round printed label with red margin), Lakej. 95—96. (rectangular printed label), South Yemen - Lahej, N of Aden - 1895 - Lt. Col. Yerbury - BM 1895-69 (recent rectangular printed label), *Lahejia cinerascens* - Type Gahan (handwritten rectangular label), Syntype - *Lahejia cinerascens* - Gahan 1896 (recent handwritten rectangular label).

Syntype ♀ labelled as follow: SYNTYPE (round printed label with light-blue margin), Lakej. 95—96. (rectangular printed label), South Yemen - Lahej, N of Aden - 1895 - Lt. Col. Yerbury - BM 1895-69 (recent rectangular printed label), Type ex Gahan (handwritten rectangular label), Syntype - *Lahejia cinerascens* - Gahan 1896 (recent handwritten rectangular label) (both specimens in the Natural History Museum, London). Arabia merid., Yemen, leg. G. Scortecci, Sokna (Tihama) m. 200, 20.VIII.1965, *Pseudomalegia donckieri* (Pic) det. Daccordi '81 (1 ♂, 6 ♀♀, Museo civico di Storia naturale, Milano; 1 ♀, Naturhistorisches Museum Basel); Shuqaiq am Roten Meer, 2.IV.1983, Saudi Arabia, C. Holzschuh, *Pseudomalegia donckieri* Pic, Daccordi det. 1988 (1 ♀, Naturhistorisches Museum Basel).

**Redescription of the syntypes.** Length 3 mm and 3.4 mm. Body (Figs 1, 2) elongate, dark brown; clypeus, mouthparts, antennae and legs ferruginous. Dorsum covered with whitish and long pubescence. Frons with a weak longitudinal impression in the middle (faint in one specimen); two short lateral ridges on each side near the antennal insertion (Fig. 4); punctuation similar to that of the prothorax, formed by large hair-bearing punctures with raised margins and flat bottoms; distal margin of the labrum convex. Eyes prominent, large, oval, with a feeble sinuate emargination near the antennal insertion. Antennae (Fig. 8) reaching the humeral zone; segments 1–6 ferruginous, 7–11 somewhat darker.

Pronotum moderately transverse (length/width: 0.72 mm/0.85 mm and 0.70 mm/0.75 mm), convex, without lateral margins; the maximum width either at the anterior third (first syntype) or at midlength (second syntype); its sides regularly arched, more strongly converging towards the base; distal margin a little wider than the basal; punctuation of the prothorax (Fig. 5) as on the head. Pro- and mesosternum longer than wide (Figs 9, 10); metasternum in centre 1.2 times as long as the mesosternum, with a longitudinal, slightly impressed line from the first third to the distal margin, which has a short U-shaped impression in the middle.

Legs (Figs 11, 12, 13) slender; femora moderately enlarged, not toothed; tibiae not emarginate; tarsus about as long as 3/4 of the tibia. Claws bifid (Fig. 7).

Scutellum small, pubescent, longer than wide, with distal margin squared.

Elytra (length/width: 2.50 mm/1.45 mm and 2.12 mm/1.27 mm) with parallel sides along the basal 2/3, regularly arched and converging apically; apical corner nearly at right angle (Fig. 3); punctuation strong and irregular (Fig. 6).

**Distribution.** Yemen, Saudi Arabia.

**Notes.** A third, damaged, syntype specimen is preserved in the British Museum (S. Shute, *pers. comm.*). The other specimens examined match the syntypes completely. A specimen from Aden (ex coll. Pic) was studied by DACCORDI (1983: 225), who considered it as conspecific with the material collected by Scortecchi and here re-examined.

The aedeagus and the spermatheca are figured by DACCORDI (1983: 226).

PIC (1904b) pointed out the peculiar punctuation of head and prothorax of “*Malegia donckieri*”; this character is also evident at low magnification using diffuse lighting; it was cited by DACCORDI (1979), but not taken into further consideration in his later study (DACCORDI 1983). I noticed this kind of punctuation in the African species examined [*Lahejia lefevrei* (JACOBY, 1897), *L. tibialis* (JACOBY, 1901), *L. fulvipes* (JACOBY, 1898)], but not in *Lahejia turkestanica* (REITTER, 1890), in which the prothorax has a sparsely punctate surface.

DACCORDI (1983) transferred *Malegia schimperi* LEFÈVRE, 1891 to *Pseudomalegia* and suggested that also other species assigned to *Malegia* could be congeneric with *Pseudomalegia* (i.e. *Lahejia*).

The new taxonomic changes for the species assigned to *Pseudomalegia* so far are as follows:

- *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896 (type locality: Aden).  
= *Pseudomalegia donckieri* (PIC, 1904b) **syn.nov.**, **comb.nov.** (described as *Malegia*; type locality: Aden).
- *Lahejia fulvipes* (JACOBY, 1898) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Malvern, Natal).
- *Lahejia lefevrei* (JACOBY, 1897) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Natal, Estcourt).
- *Lahejia minuta* (WEISE, 1919) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Uhehe, Lukuledi).
- *Lahejia schimperi* (LEFÈVRE, 1891) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (described as *Malegia*; type locality: Abyssinie).  
= *Malegia caffer* PIC, 1904a (type locality: Caffrarie).
- *Lahejia tibialis* (JACOBY, 1901) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (type locality: Cape Colony, Dunbrody).
- *Lahejia turkestanica* (REITTER, 1890) **comb.nov.** from *Pseudomalegia* (described as *Malegia*; type locality: Dshisak in Turkestan, now Uzbekistan).

### Aknowledgements

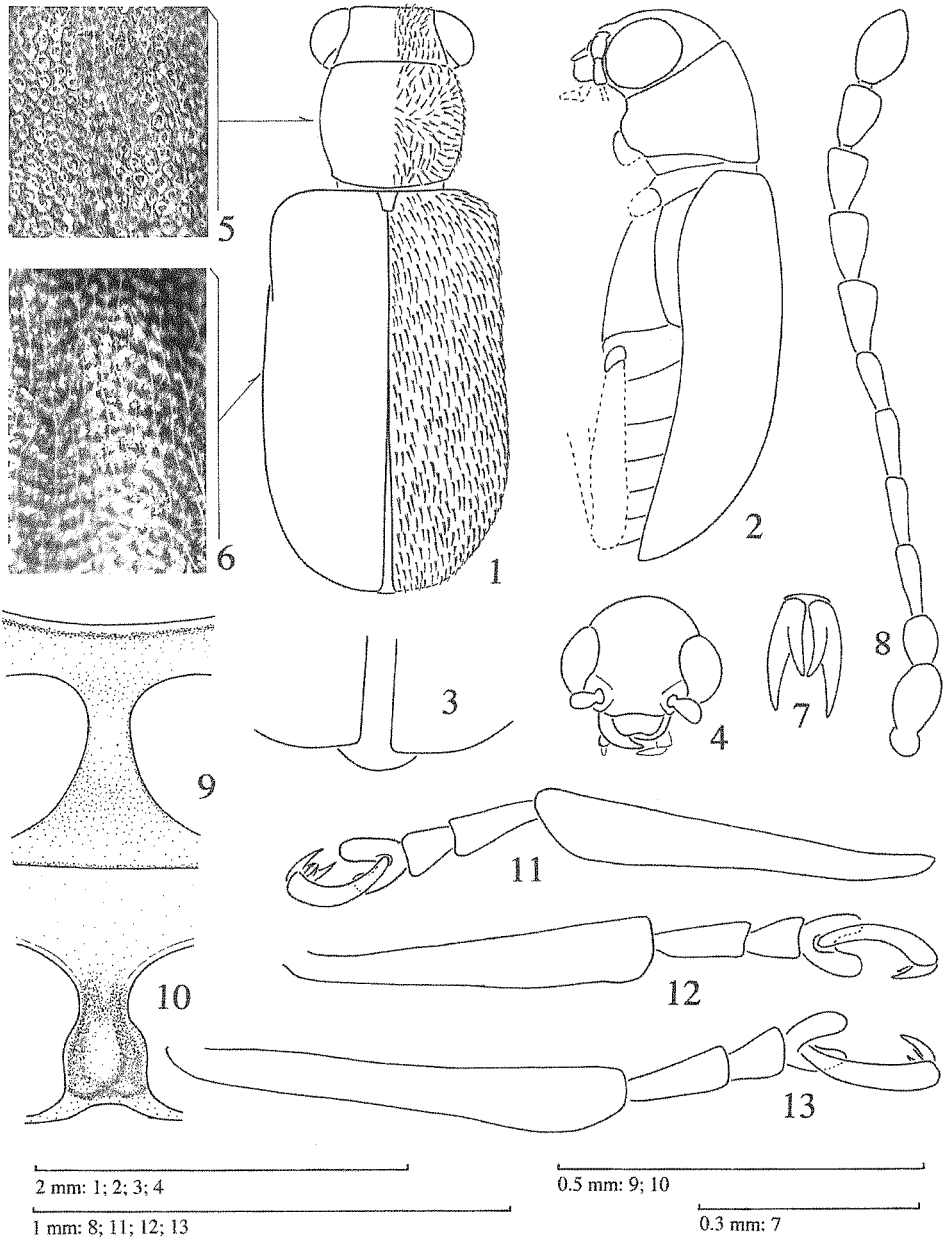
I wish to thank for their friendly help: Mauro Daccordi (Museo regionale di Scienze naturali di Torino), Lev Medvedev (Institute of Ecology and Evolution, Moscow), Fabrizio Rigato (Museo civico di Storia naturale, Milano), Sharon Shute (British Museum of Natural History, London) and Eva Sprecher (Naturhistorisches Museum Basel).

### References

- DACCORDI M. (1979): *Insects of Saudi Arabia. Coleoptera: Fam. Chrysomelidae Subfam. Eumolpinae e Chlamisinae*. Fauna of Saudi Arabia **1**: 304–307.
- DACCORDI M. (1983): *Missioni del professor Giuseppe Scortecci nell'Arabia Meridionale. Coleoptera Chrysomelidae: Eumolpinae*. Atti della Società italiana di Scienze naturali e del Museo civico di Storia naturale di Milano **124(3–4)**: 224–228.
- GAHAN C. J. (1896): *On Coleoptera from Aden and Somaliland*. The Annals and Magazine of natural History, **6th series, 18**: 448–461.
- JACOBY M. (1897): *Further Contributions to the Knowledge of the Phytophagous Coleoptera of Africa, including Madagascar. Part II*. Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London **1897**: 527–577, 1 pl.
- JACOBY M. (1898): *Additions to the Knowledge of the Phytophagous Coleoptera of Africa. – Part I*. Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London **1898**: 212–242, 1 pl.
- JACOBY M. (1901): *A further contribution to our knowledge of African Phytophagous Coleoptera*. Transactions of the Entomological Society of London **1901**: 209–256, 1 pl.
- LEFÈVRE E. (1883): *Malegia (nov. gen.)*. Annales de la Société entomologique de France, Bulletin, **6e série, 3**: cxv–cxvi.
- LEFÈVRE E. (1891): *Descriptions d'espèces nouvelles de Clytrides et d'Eumolpides*. Annales de la Société Entomologique de Belgique, Bulletin **35**: cxxlviii–cclxxix.
- MEDVEDEV L. N. (1996): *The Chrysomelidae of Arabia*. Fauna of Saudi Arabia **15**: 211–263.
- PIC M. (1904a): *Diagnoses de seize Coléoptères exotiques appartenant a diverses familles*. L'Échange **20(231)**: 18–20.
- PIC M. (1904b): *Diagnoses de Coléoptères paléarctiques et exotiques*. L'Échange **20(233)**: 33–36.
- REITTER E. (1890): *Beschreibungen neuer Coleopteren aus Europa, dem Kaukasus, Russisch-Armenien und Turkestan*. Wiener Entomologische Zeitung **9(7)**: 189–198.
- WEISE J. (1919): *Afrikanische Chrysomeliden und Coccinelliden*. Arch. Natg., **A(4), 83(1917)**: 174–207.

#### Address of author:

Stefano Zoia  
 via Console Marcello 18/4  
 I-20156 Milano  
 ITALY  
 E-mail: zoia.polese@tiscalinet.it



**Figs 1–13.** *Lahejia cinerascens* GAHAN, 1896, syntype: 1, body, dorsal view; 2, body, lateral view; 3, elytra, apical corner; 4, head; 5, prothorax punctation; 6, elytron punctation; 7, claws; 8, antenna; 9, prosternum; 10, mesosternum; 11, protibia with tarsus; 12, mesotibia with tarsus; 13, metatibia with tarsus.