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# Aphelinid parasitoids (Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea) of armoured scale insects (Homoptera: Diaspididae) from India

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#### Abstract

The members of the family Diaspididae are among the most important pests in agriculture and considered as a promising target for the biological control programmes. These insects may attack any part of plant by sucking sap, injecting toxic saliva, due to which the trees show heavy damage resulting in collapse. However, these insects are usually parasitized by the members of the families like Aphelinidae, Encyrtidae and Signiphoridae. Among these families of parasitic hymenoptera, the members of the family Aphelinidae appear to be a dominant factor in bringing about partial to complete control of these insects. The taxonomic study of these parasitoids is essential to provide correct identification without which successful control measures cannot be achieved. Present work is a preliminary step in providing knowledge of Indian Aphelinid genera which acts as an efficient biocontrol agent against above mentioned pest species and found to be helpful in biological control programmes.

**Keywords:** Aphelinidae; armoured scale insects; parasitoids; India.

#### Introduction

The members of the family Diaspididae are commonly called as "Armoured Scale Insects" (Fig. 3) belonging to the important family in the Coccoidea because of their number, abundance and economic significance. Many species of armoured scales are among the most important pest in agriculture and considered as a promising target for the biological control programmes. They are found on all parts of the plant but are most noticeable on the fruit. Heavy infestations may cause discoloration, shoot distortion and leaf drop. The tree's bark may split and the twigs and branches may die back and this sometimes shows heavy damage resulting in collapse. Chemical control is difficult because the insects are protected by their hard waxy coverings. They are also becoming resistant to many insecticides and pesticides. However, these armoured scales are usually parasitized by a number of chalcidoid parasitoids belonging to the families Aphelinidae, Encyrtidae and Signiphoridae. Among these families of parasitic Hymenoptera, the members of the family Aphelinidae appears to be a dominant factor in bringing about partial to complete control of armoured scale insects (Rosen and DeBach, 1979; Viggiani, 1990). In spite of the fact that large number of armoured scale Insects are responsible for damage of fruit trees resulting in loss of fruit production, so far there is no comprehensive work dealing with the armoured scale parasitoid of insects from India, however, several publications dealing with the taxonomy

of Indian Aphelinidae, parasitoids reared from armoured scale hosts were also described. The following publications are of use in identifying the parasitoids: Rosen and DeBach (1979); Agrawal (1984); Hayat (1974, 1983, 1985, 1986,1998); Compere (1955).

In present work, a generic key for the identification of the Aphelinid parasitoids of the armoured scale insects is given along with the list of these parasitoids, their total number of species in world and India and species of armoured scale insects (hosts) with their distribution in India.

#### Family Aphelinidae

The Chalcidoid family Aphelinidae contains 32 genera in total among which 21 genera occur in India, of these the species of the genera known to be exclusively parasitic on armoured scale insects are Aphytis Howard, Coccobius Ratzeburg, Coccophagoides Girault, Encarsia Foerster, Marlattiella Howard, **Pteroptrix** Westwood, and Proaphelinoides Girault, and of these the genera Bardylis and Prophyscusare not represented from India (Hayat, 1985, 1989).

The genus *Encarsia* Foerster with over 200 described species in the world contains about 20% species that are considered parasitoids of armoured scale insects.

## **Diagnosis of Aphelinids**

**Female:** Small to medium sized chalcids not exceeding 1.5 mm in length, antennae 3-9 segmented, excluding the radicle and anelli

(Fig.1), mandible with 2 teeth and a truncation, mesoscuteum with complete notoular line, forewing with marginal vein long, stigma vein usually short (Fig. 2);gaster usually with 7 terga, occasionally with 8 terga.

**Male:** Sexual diamorphism very little and largely confined to the antennal structure.

# Brief notes on the Indian genera of Aphelinid parasitoids of armoured scale insects

# 1. Genus *Aphytis* Howard [Key couplet: 4] (Figs. 4-6)

Aphytis Howard, 1900: 168. Type species Aphytis chilensis Howard, by monotypy.

Prospaphelinus De Gregorio, 1914: 227. Type species Aphelinus (Prospaphelinus )silvestrii De Gregorio, by monotypy. As subgenus of Aphelinus. Synonymy by Mercet, 1930b: 48-49.

Paraphytis Compere, 1925: 129. Type species Paraphytis vittatus Compere, by original designation. Synonymy by DeBach & Rosen, 1976: 541.

Syediella Shafee, 1970: 144. Type species Syediella maculate Shafee, by original designation. Synonymy by Hayat, 1982: 169.

#### **Diagnosis**

Female

Colour of body, antennae, wings and legs variable. Antenna with 6 segments, some with 5 or 4segments.Pronotummedially membranous, thus made up of two plates, the seta at each postero lateral corner longer than other setae along collar: mid lobe with reduced number of setae, mainly 10-12, each axilla with 1 and scutellum with 4 setae; axillae very slightly projecting forwards; mesothoracic dorsum with a median pale line or shallow groove; metanotum with a antero-median tubercle; propodeum always longer than metanotum, with a fine open 'S'-shaped ridge mesad of each spiracle and medially always variously reticulate: mesopostphragma long and broad. Fore wing variable, but with venation long, reaching clearly beyond half-length of wing; Legs normal, not robust; tarsai 5-segmented. Petiole transverse. usually reticulate. Gaster with 7 terga.

#### **Species and Distribution**

World species, 130; India, 17 species.

# 2. Genus *Coccobius* Ratzeburg [Key couplet: 5] (Figs. 7-9)

Coccobius Ratzeburg, 1852: 195. Type species Coccobius annulicornis Ratzeburg, designated by Gahan & Fagan, 1923: 37. Placed on Official List of Generic Names in Zoology, ICZN, 1991, Opinion 1646, Bull. Zool. Nomen., 48: 183-184.

Physcus Howard, 1895b: 43. Type species Coccophagus varicornis Howard, by monotypy. Synonymy by Hayat, 1983: 78.

Encyrtophyscus Blanchard, in De Santis, 1948: 192. Type species *Physcus flavoflagellatus* De Santis, by original designation. Synonymy by Hayat, 1983: 78.

Physculus Yasnosh, 1977: 1115. Type species Physculus danzigae Yasnosh, by original designation. Synonymy by Hayat, 1983: 78.

### **Diagnosis**

Female

Antenna with 7 segments, with an anellus. Pronotum entire, narrow in dorsal view of thorax; mid lobe of mesoscutum large, with numerous setae of which the posterior pair long; side lobes small, shaped like a trepezium, each with 2 setae; axillae small, scutellum large, posterior margin broadly rounded, usually with 4-6 setae, rarely more than 6; metanotum with a median longitudinal groove: propodeum not or not much longer than metanotum, Fore wing without a lineacalva and with a characteristically shaped stigmal vein. Tarsai 5-segmented: mid tibial spur large; mid basitarsus with peg-like setae. Gaster at least as long as thorax, rarely shorter; hopypygium not extending to apex of gaster; ovipositor variable.

#### **Species and Distribution**

World species 74; India, 7 species.

# 3. Genus CoccophagoidesGirault [Key couplet: 6] (Figs. 10 &11)

Coccophagoides Girault, 1915: 58. Type species Coccophagus abnormicornis Girault, by original designation.

Diaspiniphagus Silvestri, 1927: 35. Type species Prospalta similis Masi, by original designation. Synonymy by Mercet, 1928b: 511.

Primaprospaltella DeBach& La Salle, 1981: 644. Type species Prospalta murtfeldtae Howard, by original designation. Synonymy by Hayat, 1983: 81.

#### Diagnosis

Female

Antenna with 8 segments, and usually with an anellus. Thorax depressed; pronotum medially membranous; axillae strongly produced forwards; scutellum distinctly shorter than mid lobe, each axilla and scutellum with 12-22, 2-3, 1-2, and 4-6 setae; propodeum with posterior margin medially triangularly produced. Fore wing

with marginal vein distinctly shorter than costal cell. Tarsai 5-segmented; tarsal segments generally shorter. Gaster about as long as head plus thorax; TVII band-like, latero-ventrally continuous with or connected to, outer plates of ovipositor, thus gaster with 8 terga; ovipositor at most slightly exserted; hypopygium either prominent reaching to apex or beyond of gaster, or only to about the level of cereal plates.

#### **Species and Distribution**

World species, 16; India, 2 species.

# 4. Genus *Encarsia*Foerster [Key couplet: 6] (Figs. 12-14)

Encarsia Foerster, 1878 65 Type species Encarsia tricolor Foerster, by monotypy Aspidiotiphagus Howard, 1894a 229 Type species Coccophagus citnnus Craw, by original designation Synonymy by Viggiani & Mazzone, 1979 44

Prospalta Howard, 1894b 6 Type species Coccophagus aurantu Howard, designated by the ICZN, Opinion 845 Preoccupied by Prospalta Walker, 1857, in Lepidoptera Prospaltella Ashmead, 1904b 126 Replacement name for Prospalta Howard, not Walker Synonymy by Viggiani&Mazzone, 1979 44

Mimatomus Cockerell, 1911 464 Type species Mimatomu speltatus Cockerell, by monotypyAs synonym of Prospaltella by Girault, 1917a 114

Doloresia Mercet, 1912b 294 Type species Prospaltella filicorms Mercet, by original designation Synonymy by Mercet, 1930a 191

Prospaltoides Brethes, 1914 12 Type species Prospaltoides howardi Brethes, by original designation Synonymy with Aspidiotiphagus through synonymy of the type species, by Brethes, 1916 429

Paraspidwtiphagus Alam, 1956 359 Type species Aspidiotiphagus flavus Compere, by original designation As subgenus of Aspidiotiphagus

Aleurodiphilus DeBach& Rose, 1981 659 Type species Aleurodiphilus amencanus DeBach& Rose, by original designation Synonymy by Hayat, 1983-85

## **Diagnosis**

Female

Antenna with 8 segments, scape cylindrical or slightly flattened, but never expanded beneath; relative dimensions variable. Mandibles bidentate, teeth either sharp or blunt, or weakly developed. Thoracic dorsum only a little convex, but usually on the flatter side; pronotum medially membranous, with usually 6-12 setae along collar, a seta at each postero-lateral angle conspicuously longer; mid lobe with 2-18 setae; scutellum distinctly broader than long, more or less biconvex lens shaped, with 4 setae, and a

pair of pits; propodeum narrow in middle, not much longer than metanotum. Forewing shape and length of marginal fringe variable; costal cell at most as long as marginal vein, and usually with a line of minute setae on ventral surface; submarginal vein with 2 setae, rarely 1 or more than 2; there is always present a strong seta at junction of submarginal vein and parastigma oron parastigma; the number of setae on (anterior margin of) marginal vein vary; postmarginal vein absent, rarely indicated and then very short and like a spur; discal setae variable, disc very sparsely to very densely setose; Hind wings narrow, with sparsely setose disc and with a row of setae extending from apex of veins to apex of wing. Legs normal; tarsai 5-segmented or sometimes midtarsai 4segmented. Petiole transverse. Gaster with 7terga; hypopygium never extending to apex of gaster.

### **Species and Distribution**

World species, 222; India, 52 species.

# 5. Genus *Marlattiella* Howard [Key couplet: 2] (Figs. 15 &16)

Marlattiella Howard, 1907: 73. Type species Marlattiella prima Howard, by original designation.

### Diagnosis

Female

Antenna 4-segmented; funicle segment small, quadrate or broader than long; clava long, slightly curved. Eves small, occupying much less than half of head; malar space longer; frontovertex narrower than eye. Pronotum medially membranous; mid lobe, each side lobe and scutellum with 6, 2 and 4 setae; axilla without setae; mid lobe and scutellum with a mid-longitudinal fine line; propodeum slightly longer than metanotum, with a triangular projection in middle of posterior margin. Fore wing as in Aphytis; costal cell distinctly shorter than marginal vein and with 2 setae; linea calva distinct, proximally bordered by several lines of setae; submarginal vein with one seta; stigma vein short, but with a distinct neck, stigma with 4 sensilla. Tarsai 5-segmented. Gaster as in Aphytis; hypopygium not extending to apex of gaster.

### **Species and Distribution**

World species, 2; India, 1 species.

6. Genus *Pteroptrix* Westwood [Key couplet: 1] (Figs. 17 &18)

Pteroptrix Westwood, 1833b: 344. Type species Pteroptrix dimidiatus Westwood, by monotypy.

[Pterothrix Nees, 1834: 409. Invalid emendation]

[Gyrolasia Foerster, 1856: 145. Replacement name for *Pterothrix* Nees, considered preoccupied by *Pterothrix*de Candolle, in plants]

Archenomus Howard, 1898: 136. Type species Archenomus bicolor Howard, by monotypy. Synonymy by Nowicki, in Mercet, 1928b: 507

Casca Howard, 1907: 83. Type species Casca chinensis Howard, by original designation. Synonymy by Novitzky, 1962: 193.

Artas Howard, 1907: 85. Type species Artas koebelei Howard, by original designation. Synonymy by Hayat, 1983: 94.

Wspaniella Mercet, 1911: 511. Type species Archenomus lauri Mercet, by original designation. Implied synonym of *Pteroptrix* by Viggiani, in Viggiani&Garonna, 1993: 58.

Pteroptrichoides Fullaway, 1913: 27. Type species Pteroptrichoides perkinsi Fullaway, by original designation. Synonymy by Mercet, 1928b: 507.

Apteroptrix Girault, 1915: 65. Type species Apteroptrix albifemur Girault, by original designation.Implied synonym of Pteroptrix by Viggiani, in Viggiani&Garonna, 1993: 58.

Pseudopteroptrix Fullaway, 1918: 464. Type species Pseudopteroptrix imitatrix Fullaway, by monotypy. Synonymy by Mercet, 1928b: 507.

Oa Girault, 1929b: [4], Type species Archenomus biguttatus Girault, by original designation. Implied synonym of Pteroptrix by Viggiani, in Viggiani&Garonna, 1993:58.

Aphelosoma Nikol'skaya, 1963: 186. Type species Aphelosoma plana Nikol'skaya, by original designation. Synonymy by Viggiani, in Viggiani&Garonna, 1993: 58.

Archenomiscus Nikol'skaya, in Nikol'skaya&Yasnosh, 1966: 249. Type species Pteroptrix maritimus Nikol'skaya, by designation of Hayat, 1983: 77. Implied synonym of Pteroptrix by Viggiani, in Viggiani&Garonna, 1993: 58. [Described as a subgenus of Archenomus]

### **Diagnosis**

Female

Extremely close to *Encarsia* Foerster, and especially, but differing from that genus in

having all tarsi 4-segmented, antenna 7 or 8 segmented and the flagellum usually elongate, spindle-shaped.

#### **Species and Distribution**

World species, 62; Oriental, 30; India, 5 species.

# 7. Genus *Proaphelinoides* Girault [Key couplet: 4] (Figs. 19 &20)

Proaphelinoides Girault, 1917c: [4]. Type species Proaphelinoides elongatiformis Girault, by original designation.

Bestiola Nikol'skaya, 1963: 187. Type species Bestiola mira Nikol'skaya, by original designation. Synonymy by Rosen, 1980 [Dec.]: 299; also Hayat, 1981 [Jan.]: 469.

### **Diagnosis**

Female

Antenna 6 segmented, Mandible bidentate, Pronotum long, medially divided by a suture; mid lobe and scutellum with a fine mid-longitudinal line/groove; scutellum with a notch in posterior margin; setae on thoracic dorsum long and brown to dark brown; mid lobe, each side lobe, each axilla and scutellum with 12-16, 2, 1 and 4 setae; propodeum medially as long as metanotum and with a fine; posterior margin of propodeum with very fine crenulae. Fore wing broad, with or without a bunch of dark setae behind proximal half of marginal vein; linea calva distinct or not clearly defined, proximally bordered by 1-4 lines of setae; submarginal vein with 2 setae, the distal seta very long; marginal vein distinctly longer than costal cell and with long setae; stigma with 4 sensilla. Hind wing broad, with sparsely to moderately densely setose disc. Legs long and slender; tarsai 5segmented. Gaster at least as long as head plus thorax; ovipositor long, slightly exserted at apex.

#### **Species and Distribution**

World species, 4; India, 2 species.

#### Key to Indian Aphelinid Genera, Parasitoid of Armoured Scale Insects

Tarsi 4 segmented, antenna 7 segmented (Fig. 17)      Tarsi 5 segmented (Fig. 16)	
2. Antenna 4 segmented (Fig. 15)  Antenna with more than 4 segments	Marlattiella Howard
3. Antenna 6 segmented (Fig. 19), propodeum longer than metanotum  Antenna at least 7 segmented, propodeum no longer than metanotum	

4.	Body elongated and flattened; fore wing with a branch of dark setae below marginal vein (Fig. 20)  Proaphelinoides Girault
	Body neither elongated nor flattened, forewing normal
5.	Antenna 7 segmented (Fig. 7); axillae short, not protruding
	Antennas & cognostadi evillas pretruding
	Antennae 8 segmented; axillae protruding
	Antennae spindle shaped; forewing with marginal vein shorter than sub-marginal vein, the latter with 3
	setae (Fig. 10 & 11)
	Antenna usually not spindle shaped, fore wing with marginal vein longer than submarginal, the latter
	with 2 setae (Fig. 12 & 13)

# List of Aphelinid parasitoids, including total number of species (world and Indian), armoured scale insects/Diaspidids host(s) and distribution.

		lumber of Species	Diaspidid Host(s)	Distribution
Genera	World	India (excluding those species with unknown hosts)		
Aphytis Howard	130	17		
		Aphytis bangalorensis Rosen &DeBach	Pseudaulacaspis barberi(Green) on Mango	Karnataka
		Aphytis fiorinae (Rosen & Rose)	Fiorinia theae(Green) on tea	Assam
		Aphytis lephidosaphes (Compere)	Cornuaspis beckii (Newman)	India without specific region
A		Aphytis lingnanensis Compere	Aonidiella aurantii (Maskell)	Near New Delhi, Assam, Uttar Pradesh
	)	Aphytis melinus DeBach	Aonidiella aurantii (Maskell) on rose indet.diaspidid onCitrus species	Haryana, New Delhi
		Aphytis vandenboschi DeBach& Rosen	Quadriaspidiotus perniciosus	Himachal Pradesh
		Aphytis coheni DeBach	Aonidiella orientalis	Khunti near Bihar
		<i>Aphytis manii</i> Hayat	Hemiberlesa lataniae	Karnataka
		Aphytis	Paralatoria oleae	India

		paramaculicornis (DeBach& Rosen)	(Lucas)	
		Aphytis peculiaris (Girault)	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on rose	Khunti near Bihar
		Aphytis proclia (Walker)	Parlatoria ziziphus (Lucas)	India
		Aphytis philippinensis DeBach& Rosen	Aonidiella aurantii (Maskell)	Assam, Karnataka
		Aphytis sankarani Rosen &DeBach	Pseudaulacaspis cockerelli (Cooley) on betel nut, banana and coconut	Karnataka
		Aphytis theae (Cameron)	Fiorinia theae (Green) on tea Pseudaonidia duplex (Cockerell) on tea	Assam, Himachal Pradesh
Coccobius Ratzeberg	26	7	Y	
rtu.zoborg		Coccobius aligarhensis (Hayat)	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on Ficussp.	Uttar Pradesh
		Coccobius eticulates (Compere &Annecke)	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on Dalbergia sisso	Andhara Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar (Khunti), Kerala
•. (		Coccobius comperei (Hayat)	on Indet.Diaspidids	Karnataka , Kerala
8		Coccobius fulvus (Compere &Annecke)	Pinaspis strachani (Cooley) on Citrus sp.; Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on Dalbergia sisso	Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh
Coccophagoides Girault	16	2	<u> </u>	
Sduit		Coccophagoides utilis Doutt	Parlatoria oleae (Lucas) on peach	Bihar
		Coccophagoides orientalis Agarwal	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on neem, ziziphus, jamun etc.	Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh

Encarsia Foerster	222	52		
		Encarsia citrina (Craw)	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on coconut; Quadraspidiotus perniciosus (Comstock)	Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir
		Encarsia perniciosi (Tower)	Quadriaspidiotus perniciosus (Comstock) on apple	Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh
		Encarsia elongate (Dozier)	Fiorinia theae(Green) on tea	Assam
		Encarsia sankarani Hayat	Fiorinia theae(Green) on tea	Assam
		Encarsia aurantii (Howard)	Aonidiella orientalis	Karnataka, Andhara Pradesh
		Encarsia bifasciafacies Hayat	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on Ficus sp.	Bihar, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh
<i>Marlattiella</i> Haward	2	1		
		Marlattiella maculata (Hayat)	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead) on Ficus sp.	Uttar Pradesh
Proaphelinoidis Girault	4	2		
		1	(Armoured scale of the tribe odonaspidini)	Assam, Karnataka
Pteroptrix Westwood	62	5		
		Pteroptrix chinensis (Westwood)	Quadriaspidiotus perniciosus (Comstock)	Jammu & Kashmir
^		Pteroptrix koebelei (Haward)	Anlacaspis tubercularis	Karnataka
		Pteroptrix machiaveli (Girault)	Chionaspis ramakrishnai	Karnataka
<b>\</b>		Pteroptrix longiclavata ( Shafee et al)	Aonidiella orientalis (Newstead)	Uttar Pradesh

### **Discussion**

The Aphelinid parasitoids had been chosen by the author as they are important in controlling the pest of agriculture especially the armoured scale insects and act as ecofriendly biocontrol agents to the environment. The taxonomic studies of these parasitoids both at generic and specific levels is important before their recommendation in any biological control program, without which an effective control measures cannot be achieved as

misidentification leads to the failure of any biocontrol strategy.

The present work providing brief study of these parasitoids which can be identified using key to genera as well as distribution of these parasitoids and their specific hosts (armoured scale insects). The present work is helpful in providing knowledge of Indian Aphelinid genera mainly associated with armoured scale species. This work also provides important information about the distribution of aphelinid parasitoids, which is helpful in any conservation programmes of these parasitoids.

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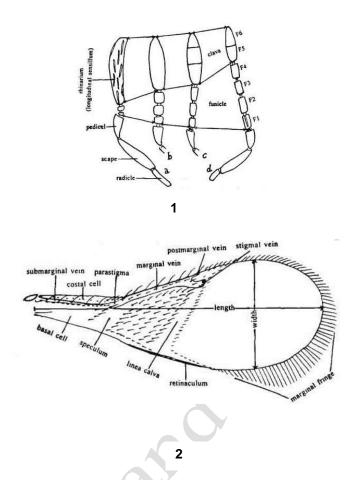
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**Figures** 



Figs. 1 & 2. Explanation of terms (Aphelinidae): 1, Antenna; 2, Forewing.

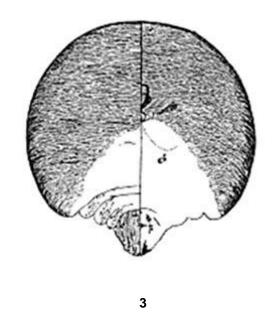
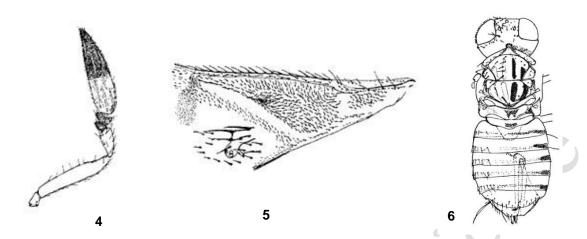
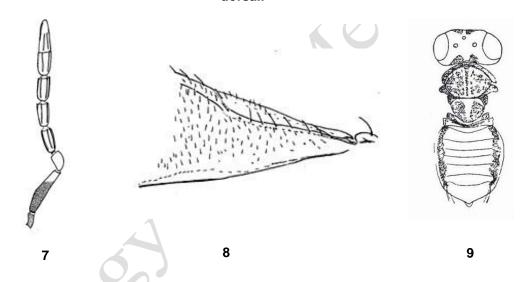


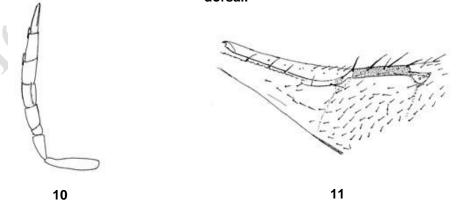
Fig. 3. Armoured Scale Insect (Aonidiella orientalis).



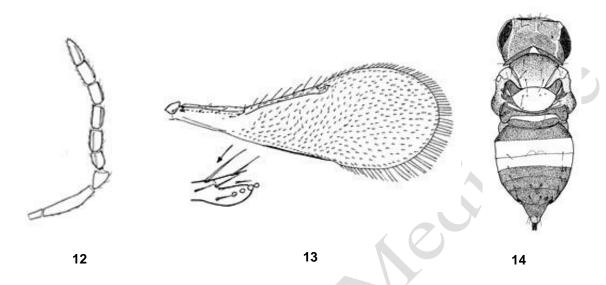
Figs. 4-6. *Aphytis* Howard: 4, Antenna; 5, Forewing, basal part; 6, Body, dorsal.



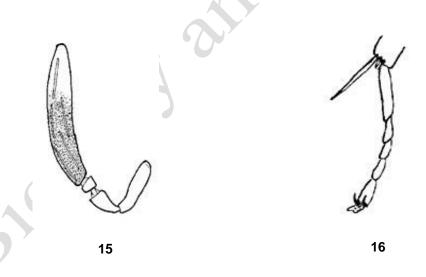
Figs. 7-9. *Coccobius* Ratzeburg: 7, Antenna; 8, Forewing, basal part; 9, Body, dorsal.



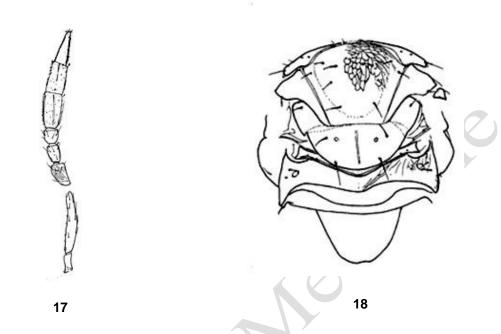
Figs.10 &11. Coccophagoides Girault: 10, Antenna; 11, Forewing, basal part.



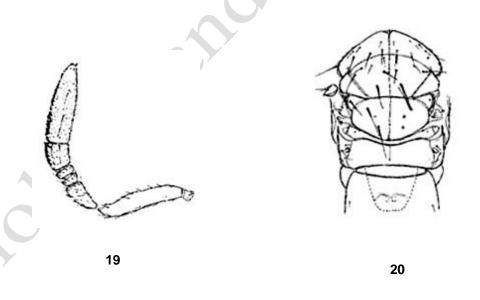
Figs. 12-14. *Encarsia* Foerster: 12, Antenna; 13, Forewing, basal part; 14, Body, dorsal.



Figs. 15 & 16. Marlattiella Howard: 15, Antenna; 16, Tarsal segments.



Figs. 17 & 18. Pteroptrix Westwood: 17, Antenna; 18, Thorax, dorsal.



Figs. 19 & 20. Proaphelinoides Girault: 19, Antenna; 20, Thorax, dorsal.