First record of the genus Caviceps Malloch (Diptera: Chloropidae: Oscinellinae) from India with description of a new species

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ABSTRACT: Genus Caviceps Malloch is recorded for the first time from India and a new species, C. aristalis is described. Dasyopa orientalis Cherian from India is transferred to genus Caviceps with replacement name Caviceps nartshukae Cherian as Caviceps orientalis is a preoccupied name.

KEYWORDS: Chloropidae, Tricimbini, Caviceps

INTRODUCTION

Caviceps Malloch (1924) is a small genus known by 4 species from the world. Nartshuk (1987) placed this genus under the tribe Tricimbini, along with 9 other genera. Ismay (1993) synonymised some of these genera and recognized only 4 of these genera, namely, Aphanotrigonella Nartshuk, Apropetopis Becker, Siphunculina Rondani and Tricimba Lioy under Tricimbini to which he added Pseudotricimba erected by him in 1993 and Tricimbomyia Cherian (1989). Ismay (1998) synonymised Apropetopis with Strobliola Czerny and there by recognized 6 genera under Tricimbini. Later Ambily and Cherian (2013) added Indometopis Cherian to the tribe. However, Ismay without explanation and Cherian inadvertently had left out Caviceps Malloch from the list of genera placed earlier by Nartshuk (1987) under the tribe.

The distinct identity of this genus had long been recognised by earlier workers including Sabrosky (1980), Kanmyia (1983) and others, though because of its rarity it hardly found mention in recent literature. Thus 8 genera are recognized under tribe Tricimbini.

While revising species of Dasyopa Malloch from the Oriental Region it was realised that Dasyopa orientalis Cherian (1990) with its indistinct frontal triangle, broad frons, long arista and other deviating characters, though originally placed with stated reservations under Dasyopa, shows closer affinities to the genus Caviceps to which it belongs. Hence it is transferred to that genus. Besides, a new species, Caviceps aristalis from India is also described. This is the first record of this genus from India.

MATERIAL EXAMINED

The type specimens are retained at present in the collections of the Department of Zoology, University of Kerala, Trivandrum and shall later be transferred to the National Zoological Collections, Western Ghats Regional Centre, Zoological Survey of India, Kozhikode (Calicut).