REMARKS ON *SCELIOTRACHELUS* BRUES AND
ALLIED GENERA
(HYMENOPTERA, PLATYGASTERIDAE)*

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In 1908 Brues (in Wytsman, Genera Insectorum) described a peculiar new genus *Sceliotrachelus* Brues from South Africa. At the same time he erected the new subfamily Sceliotrachelinae to comprise the single genus *Sceliotrachelus* Brues. Having some doubts on the phylogenetic relationships of this curious genus (and subfamily as well) Brues decided to place it in Scelionidae between the subfamilies Telenominae and Baeinae. He says: "The species upon which this genus is based is without doubt one of the most remarkable insects which I have ever seen. For some time I was undecided to what family it could be referred, but after much thought, I believe that it shows the greatest affinity to certain Telenominae or Teleasinae, although the relationship is by no means close. The large pronotum and the small mesoscutum are unique in this and related families, but the form and insertion of the antennae, and the configuration of the abdomen undoubtedly denote relationship to either the Ceraphronidae, Scelionidae or Platygasteridae". Brues established his new subfamily first of all on the large pronotum and on the morphology of the wings. Kieffer (1926) did not recognize the subfamily Sceliotrachelinae and included *Sceliotrachelus* Brues among the Platygasterinae (tribe Platygasterini). Contrary to Brues (1908) he emphasized that the shape of the scutellum in *Sceliotrachelus* Brues exhibits a close relationship with Chalcididae (!) rather than with families mentioned by Brues. So far as known to the author there is no study referring to this problem except for the two mentioned above.

The description (and the figure as well) does not give a clear idea of the relationships of the genus. We have had the opportunity of examining the male paratype of *Sceliotrachelus braunsi* Brues. Unfortunately, we cannot agree with either Brues or Kieffer regarding the position of this genus. After examining the paratype we have no doubt that *Sceliotrachelus* Brues belongs to the family Platygasteridae. There is no evidence of relationship either with the Scelionidae or even the Ceraphronidae. Kieffer's (1926) conjecture on the rela-

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tionship or similarity with the Chalcididae is evidently wrong. It is doubtful if Kieffer actually saw any specimens.

In 1959 Szabó established a new tribe within the Platygasteridae, the Amitini, to comprise the following genera: *Amitus* Hald., *Fidiobia* Ashm., *Pulchrisolia* Szabó and *Isolia* Först. The genus *Sceliotrachelus* Brues exhibits a striking relationship with some of these genera (particularly with *Isolia* Först.) so we are sure it should belong there. From the nomenclatorial point of view we are forced to change the name of the tribe as follows:

Sceliotrachelini Brues, 1908 — NEW STATUS
(= Amitini Szabó, 1959 — NEW SYNONYMY)

As Sceliotrachelini Brues was proposed originally as a subfamily of Scelionidae in 1908 it becomes automatically the new name of the group. The type genus is consequently *Sceliotrachelus* Brues.

The tribe Sceliotrachelini, according to our conception, should belong to the subfamily Inostemminae. We suggest it to be the most apomorphous tribe of Inostemminae, where the subcostal vein is tending to disappear gradually. In *Fidiobia* Ashm. (in all species we have seen, except in brachypterous *F. pronotata* Szabó) there is a very short subcostal vein, knobbed apically. In *Platygastoides* Dodd, at least in *P. mirabilis* (the type of genus) the subcostal vein is still knobbed apically, but as a whole, the vein is tending to disappear (Fig. 2). In *Amitus* Hald. (= *Zacrita* Först., *Passalida* Brèth.) there is sometimes a trace of vein but this is never knobbed apically. In *Isolia* Först. and *Sceliotrachelus* Brues the fore wing is perfectly veinless. The typical character of Sceliotrachelini is the antennal club in the female, which is abrupt, massive and 3-jointed (in *Amitus* Hald. the club is rather solid, the sutures obsolete). The gaster in this tribe is very stout, resembling that of the subfamily Telenominae (Scelionidae), not carinated ventrally (there is no impressed submarginal ridge) at most slightly sharpened at sides.

The curious *Platygastoides* Dodd is included also in this tribe. It combines some characters of *Fidiobia* Ashm. and *Isolia* Först. Figures 2, 3 and 4 illustrate this peculiar insect.

Genus *Sceliotrachelus* Brues

Sceliotrachelus Brues, 1908, in Wytsman, Genera Insectorum, 80:13.
Pulchrisolia Szabó, 1959, Ann. Hist. — Nat. Mus. Nat. Hung., 51:395 — NEW SYNONYMY.

The male paratype of *Sceliotrachelus braunsi* Brues was examined. Labels: "Algoa bay Capland, 11.10.96; *Sceliotrachelus braunsi* Brues, Paratype". Right wing and some legs torn off.

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The description should be completed and corrected. There are no "tufts of long yellow hairs" on the propodeum which Brues compares with those of some myrmecophilous beetles (e.g. *Lomechusa* Gr.). There is a compact hyaline membrane, just as in *Isolia* Först., *Fidiobia* Ashm. and *Platygastoides* Dodd. Consequently, there is no reason to suggest that *Sceliotrachelus* Brues is a myrmecophilous insect. The long dense hairs are found on the base of first as well as second tergite of the gaster.

The figure in Brues (1908) is, as a whole, not very exact and therefore we prefer to give a detailed drawing of the insect here (Fig. 1).

Pulchrisolia Szabó becomes inevitably a synonym of *Sceliotrachelus* Brues. The holotype of *Pulchrisolia maculata* Szabó (a female from Shirati, East Africa) was examined and found to belong to *Sceliotrachelus* Brues. So far no more material is available. We prefer to keep both — *braunsi* Brues and *maculatus* Szabó — as independent species. The necessary nomenclatorial formality is as follows — *Sceliotrachelus maculatus* (Szabó, 1959) — **new combination** (= *Pulchrisolia maculata* Szabó, 1959).

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EXPLANATION OF PLATE 1

Fig. 1. *Sceliotrachelus braunsi* Brues, male paratype. Fig. 2. *Platygastoides mirabilis* Dodd, female. Fig. 3. *Platygastoides mirabilis* Dodd, female, head. Fig. 4. *Platygastoides mirabilis* Dodd, female, antenna.