


A new variant of the rare *Phrynocaria funebris* (Crotch) (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae), with first illustrations of the female genitalia

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Introduction

The genus *Phrynocaria* Timberlake, 1943 (Coccinellidae: Coccinellinae: Coccinellini), is distributed in the Oriental, Palaearctic, and Australo-Pacific regions (Poorani, 2023). Species of this genus are characterized by a hemispherical body shape, large and narrowly separated eyes with interocular distance at the narrowest point 0.8–1.3x as wide as an eye, and lack of meso- and metatibial spurs. Most of the known species are highly polymorphic and likely to be misidentified. Seven species are currently known from India and taxonomically treated by Poorani et al. (2021) and Poorani (2023). Among these, *Phrynocaria funebris* (Crotch, 1874) is a rare species originally described from Bangalore, Karnataka, India. It is currently known only from the holotype male, illustrated along with the genitalia by Poorani et al. (2021) and Poorani (2023). A new female variant of *P. funebris* is reported here along with first-ever illustrations of the female genitalia.

Results and Discussion

A female specimen of *Phrynocaria* with a hitherto undocumented elytral pattern in the insect collections of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, was examined and it was identified as *P. funebris* as it matched the description of the male of the same species in all respects (Poorani et al. 2021) except the elytral color and pattern. It is briefly described as follows:

Length: 5.50 mm; width: 4.50 mm. Form broadly circular, dorsum strongly convex and glabrous (Fig. 1a, b). Ground colour of dorsal side yellowish; pronotum with a pair of black, subtriangular maculae on the posterior margin, medially separated (Fig. 1c); scutellar shield black, broadly triangular; each elytron with five black maculae arranged in a 1-2-1-1 pattern as illustrated (Fig. 1a, b), apical black macula transverse and medially narrowed, appears to be

formed by the fusion of two elytral spots, elytral suture with a narrow black stripe reaching the apex. Ventral side yellowish. Abdominal postcoxal line (Fig. 2) incomplete, ventrite 6 posteriorly subtruncate. Female genitalia (Fig. 3) as illustrated, spermatheca c-shaped with ramus and nodulus differentiated, cornu strongly curved, attached to bursa by a short sperm duct, infundibulum distinct.

This specimen differs from the holotype male which has dark brown to black elytra with only the lateral margins narrowly yellowish-ochreous in having yellowish elytra with a characteristic pattern, and the pronotal maculae also lack the narrow lateral projections present in the male. *Phrynocaria perrotteti* (Mulsant, 1850) is the only other polymorphic congener of *P. funebris* with a completely black variant and it differs from the latter in having larger, more narrowly separated eyes and the female genitalia are characterized by strongly curved but slightly differently shaped spermatheca and infundibulum. It is commonly collected in this region, unlike *P. funebris*, a rare species not found in any institutional collections. *Phrynocaria funebris* appears to be attracted to light as the specimen was collected in a light trap.

Material

https://data.canadensys.net/micropublications/resource?r=specimen_38

References

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Fig. 1. *Phrynocaria funebris* (Crotch) specimen NRCB-CE-1: a. dorsal view; b. lateral view; c. head and pronotum.



Fig. 2. Abdomen of specimen NRCB-CE-1.

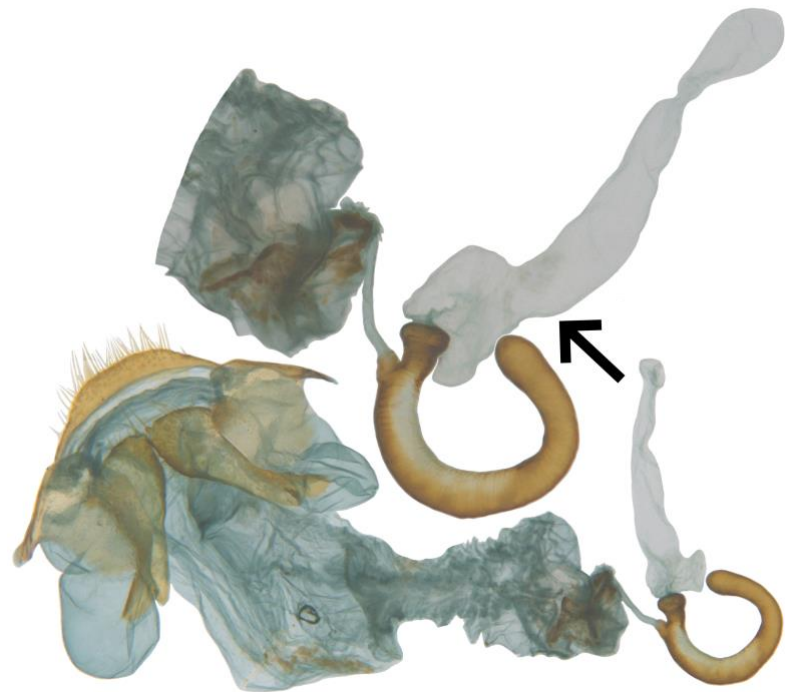


Fig. 3. Female genitalia and spermatheca (enlarged) of specimen NRCB-CE-1.