

Order Hemiptera, family Tropiduchidae

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INTRODUCTION

The family Tropiduchidae is among one of the smaller planthopper families, with around 300 species described. Most species are found in the tropics and sub-tropical regions of the world but a few genera are found in the Palaearctic region. The family is represented in UAE by two genera, *Ommatissus* Fieber, 1872, and *Kazerunia* Dlabola, 1974. Small numbers of specimens of each genus have been found so far. *Ommatissus* species appear to be associated with various species of palms (Asche & Wilson, 1989). The ‘Dubas bug’, *Ommatissus lybicus* Bergevin, 1930, is the most destructive pest in date producing regions of the Middle East (eg. Al-Azawi, 1986; Al-Yahyai, 2007). It has become increasingly difficult to control despite intensive annual spraying of insecticides. Howard & Wilson (2001) review this species and other palm-associated species of Auchenorrhyncha.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Specimens studied have been removed from alcohol either by critical point drying or by careful air drying and mounted on card points.

Specimens are deposited in National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, UK (NMWC).

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

Family **Tropiduchidae**

Tribe **Trypetimorphini** Fieber, 1872

Genus *Ommatissus* Fieber, 1872

Ommatissus lybicus Bergevin, 1930.

Plate 1

Specimens examined: Wadi Madaq, 1♂, 25.iv–4.v.2006, in light trap, leg. A. van Harten.

Remarks: This species is commonly known as the ‘Dubas bug’ and is an important pest of date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) in the Middle East. It appears to be confined to this host plant. Full details of its separation from other *Ommatissus* species are given in Asche & Wilson (1989).

Distribution: Widespread in the Middle East, with records from Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Iraq and Iran. Since 2002 also spreading in Yemen (A. van Harten, pers. comm.). Recorded, as *Ommatissus binotatus* (Fieber, 1876), from the UAE by Gassouma (1991).

Tribe **Kazerunini** Dlabola, 1974

Genus *Kazerunia* Dlabola, 1974

Kazerunia spec.

Plate 2

Specimens examined: Wadi Madaq, 1♀, 14–25.i.2006, in water trap, leg. A. van Harten; 1♀, 29.iii–10.iv.2006, in water trap, leg. A. van Harten.



Plate 1. *Ommatissus lybicus* Bergevin. (Photograph © James Turner / NMWC)

Remarks: Several *Kazerunia* species have been described from Iran (Dlabola, 1974, 1977) but this appears to be the first record from the Arabian Peninsula. The specimens from the UAE externally resemble *K. undulata* Dlabola, 1977. The species are all flightless, with reduced forewings and hind wings absent. It is likely that targeted sampling from ground vegetation may provide further specimens.

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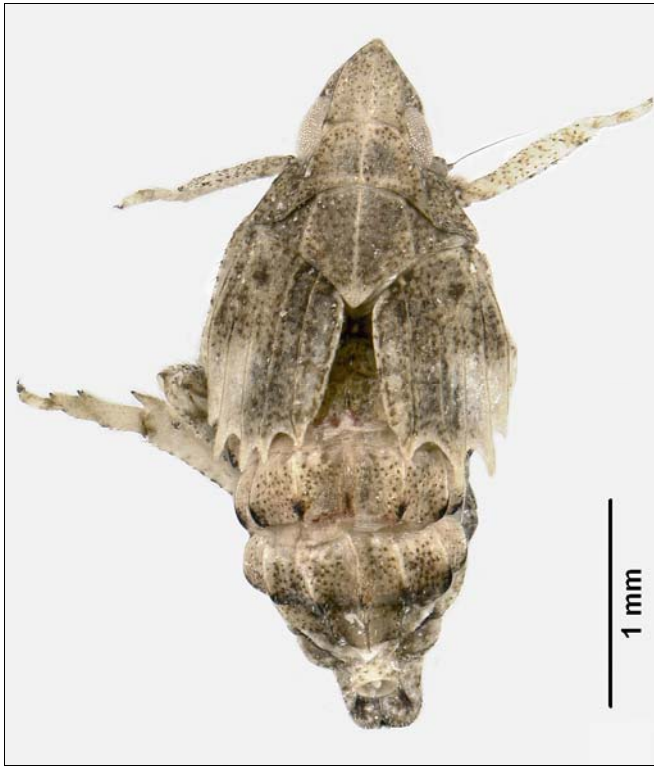


Plate 2. *Kazerunia* spec., female from Wadi Madaq. (Photograph © James Turner / NMWC)

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