

A new species of *Orthobittacus* (Mecoptera, Bittacidae) from the Middle Jurassic of Daohugou, Inner Mongolia (China)

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ABSTRACT: The genus *Orthobittacus* was established by Willmann (1989) and is characterised by a long Sc vein and the unusually developed medial sector for the Bittacidae. Four Jurassic species have been described in this genus to date: *O. abshiricus* (Martynova, 1951) from Kirgizia; *O. desacuminatus* (Bode, 1953) from Braunschweig (Germany); *O. polymitus* Novokshonov, 1996 from Karatau (Kazakhstan); and *O. maculosus* Liu, Shih, Bashkuev & Ren, 2016 from the Jiulongshan Formation of Daohugou (China). The fifth congeneric and second species from China, *O. suni* sp. nov., is described herein. The importance of the genus *Orthobittacus* for the phylogeny of Bittacidae, as the most plesiomorphic genus, is discussed.

KEY WORDS: Bittacid, fossil, Mesozoic, *Orthobittacus suni*, scorpionflies, taxonomy.

The scorpionfly (Mecoptera) family Bittacidae are known from the Upper Triassic (Riek 1955) and their peak diversity occurred in the Jurassic – 26 genera (Handlirsch 1906–1908, 1939; Martynov 1927; Carpenter 1928, 1954, 1955; Tillyard 1933; Bode 1953; Riek 1955; Willmann 1978, 1987, 1989; Sukatcheva 1990; Ansorge 1993, 1996; Novokshonov 1993a, b, 1996, 1997a, b; Ren 1993, 1997; Petrulevičius 1998, 2001a, b, 2003; Bechly & Schweigert 2000; Petrulevičius & Martins-Neto 2001; Krzemiński 2007; Petrulevičius *et al.* 2007; Li *et al.* 2008; Li & Ren 2009; Yang *et al.* 2012; Wang *et al.* 2014; Liu *et al.* 2014, 2016). At the end of Jurassic and the beginning of the Cretaceous, a strong decrease in the diversity of hangingflies was observed (Kopeć *et al.* 2016). Today, the Bittacidae comprises c.200 species in 19 genera (Penny 1997; Collucci & Amorim 2002; Huang & Hua 2005; Cai *et al.* 2006; Bicha 2007, 2011; Petrulevičius *et al.* 2007; Hua *et al.* 2008; Tan & Hua 2008a, b, 2009a, b; Chen & Hua 2011; Chen *et al.* 2013; Garcia-Garcia & Cadena-Castañeda 2015), are the second most abundant family of extant scorpionflies after Panorpidae.

The extinct genus *Orthobittacus* was established by Willmann (1989) to distinguish and classify a species described previously as *Neorthophlebia abshirica* Martynova, 1951 from the Lower Jurassic (Lias) of Kirgizia. Martynova (1951) described the specimen with a characteristic Sc vein unusually long for the Bittacidae. Willmann (1989) transferred *N. abshirica* to the new genus *Orthobittacus* and provided an updated drawing and description of the holotype, with a long Sc and also all characters typical for most Bittacidae, such as four veins in radial and medial sectors. Four years later, Novokshonov (1993a) revised the holotype and published a new drawing of *O. abshiricus* with seven medial veins (Fig. 1). Additionally, Novokshonov (1996) described a second species, *O. polymitus* Novokshonov,

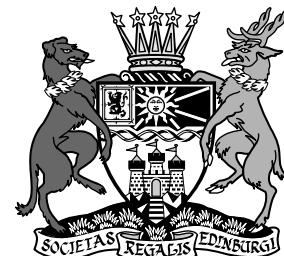
1996 from the Upper Jurassic of Karatau (Kazakhstan), characterised by a long vein Sc, four veins in the radial sector, and seven medial veins (Fig. 2). In the same year, Ansorge (1996) transferred *Protobittacus desacuminatus* Bode, 1953 from Braunschweig (Germany) to the genus *Orthobittacus*. The fourth congener, *O. maculosus* Liu, Shih, Bashkuev & Ren, 2016, was described recently from the Middle Jurassic Jiulongshan Formation of Daohugou (China). It is characterised by having a radial sector with four veins, and six veins in the medial sector in the forewing as well as in the hindwing (Fig. 3). The wings of both *O. polymitus* and *O. maculosus* bear clearly visible and well preserved colour patterns.

A new species herein described from the Jiulongshan Formation of Daohugou (China) is the fifth congener of *Orthobittacus*, and the second species from the Middle Jurassic of China. Its wings also have a visible colour pattern, but different to those of already described species.

1. Material and methods

The description of a new species is based on a well-preserved female specimen. The holotypes of *Orthobittacus polymitus* from the collection of the Paleontological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow (PIN) and *O. maculosus* from the collection of the College of Life Sciences, Capital Normal University (CNU), Beijing, China were used for comparative study.

The specimen of *O. suni* sp. nov. was studied with the use of a stereomicroscope, under the reflected light. Drawings were based on the photographs and digitally processed in Corel X5. The terminology of wing venation follows Willmann (1989),



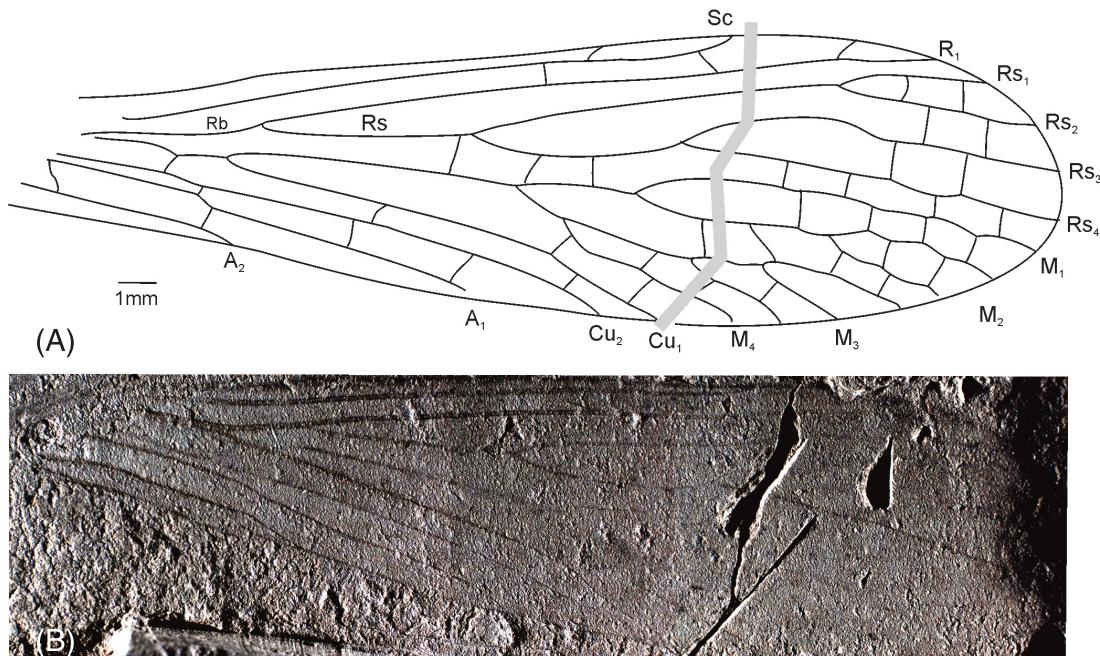


Figure 1 Forewing of holotype of *Orthobittacus abshirica* (Martynova, 1951): (A) drawing, redrawn from Novokshonov (1993, fig. 1); (B) photograph.

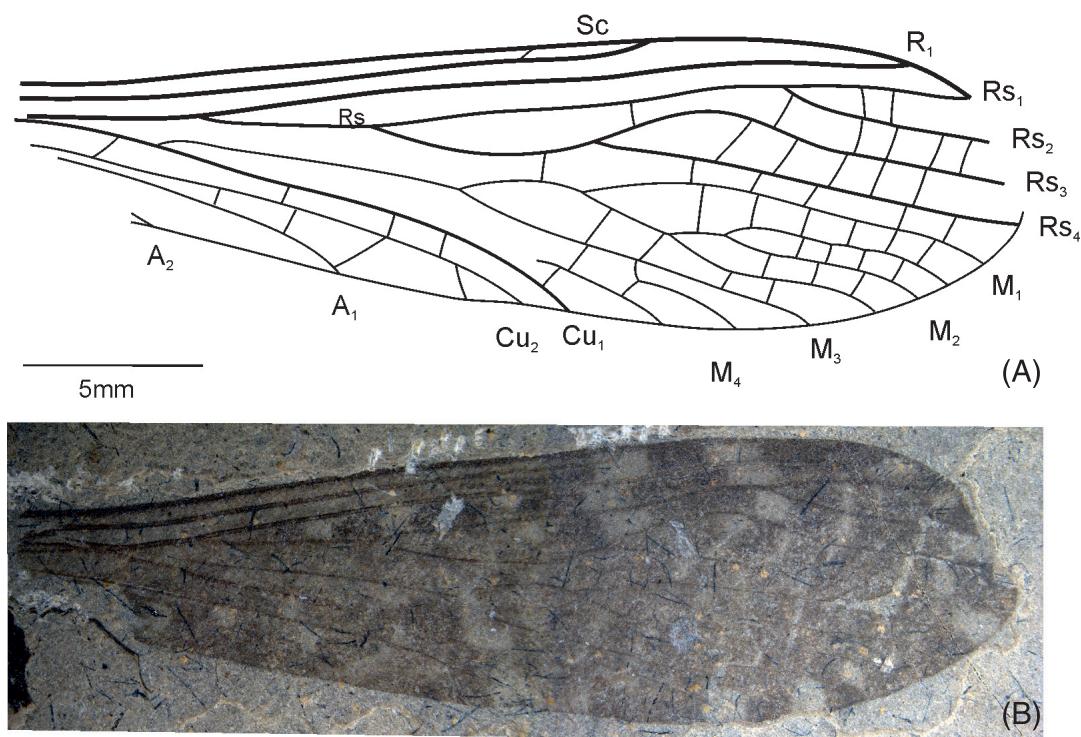


Figure 2 Forewing of holotype of *O. polymitus* Novokshonov, 1996: (A) drawing, redrawn from Novokshonov (1996, fig. 1, modified); (B) photograph.

with some modifications (Soszyńska-Maj *et al.* 2017 (this volume)) and is presented in Figures 1–3 and Figure 5. The terminology of the female genitalia follows Villagomez *et al.* (2015).

2. Systematic palaeontology

- Order Mecoptera Packard, 1886
- Infraorder Raptipedia Willmann, 1987
- Family Bittacidae Handlirsch, 1906
- Genus *Orthobittacus* Willmann, 1989

Type species. *Orthobittacus abshiricus* (Martynova, 1951, pp 1009–10, fig. 1; Novokshonov, 1993a, p. 76, fig. 1) – Lower Jurassic (Lias) from the locality of Kyzyl-Kiya (Kirghizia).

Remark. Three Jurassic species from the Laurasian area belong to the genus: *O. abshiricus* (Lower Jurassic); *O. maculosus* (Middle Jurassic); and *O. polymitus* (Upper Jurassic).

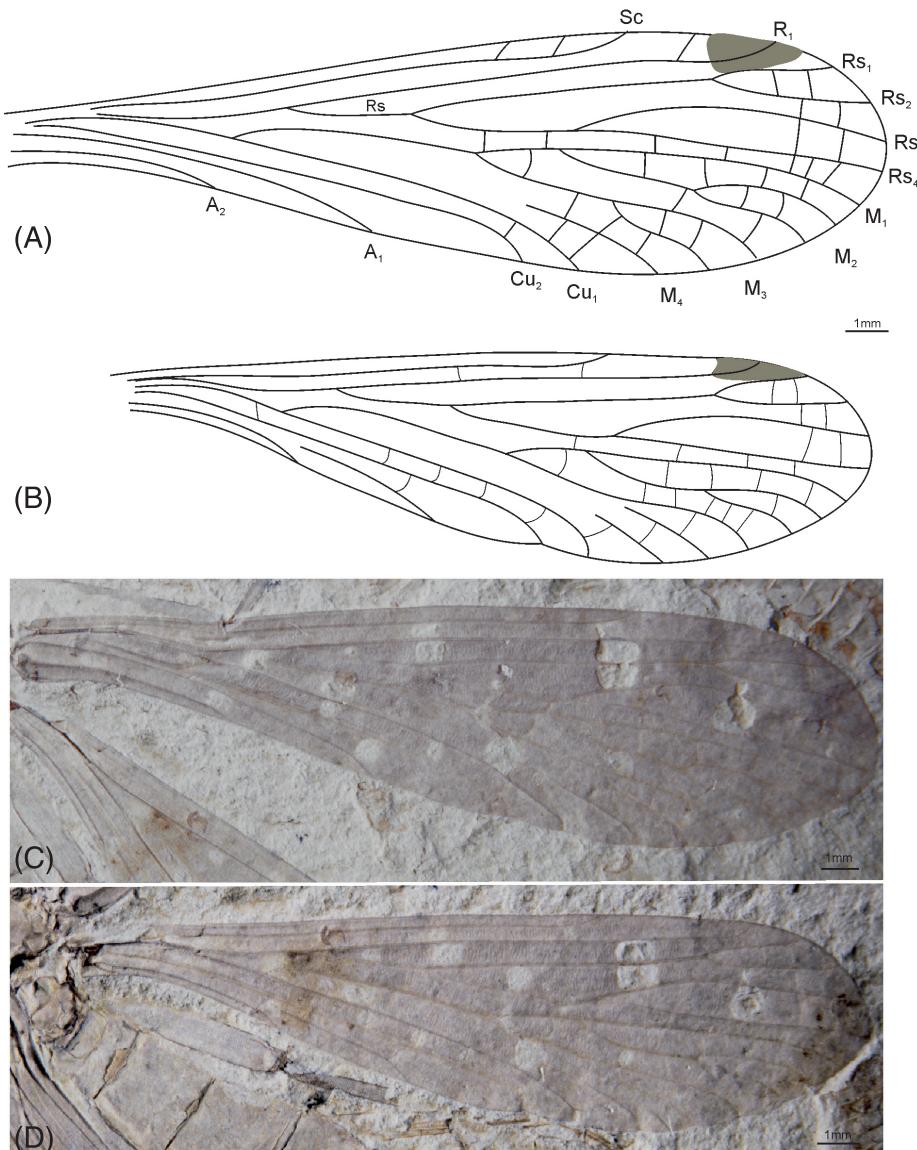


Figure 3 Wings of holotype of *O. maculosus* Liu, Shih, Bashkuev & Ren, 2016: (A, C.) forewing; (B, D) hind wing; redrawn from Liu *et al.* (2016, fig. 5, modified).

Orthobittacus suni sp. nov.

Figs 4–6

Type material. Holotype No. CNU-MEC-NN2016101 female with well-preserved wings, complete abdomen and parts of legs, without head (part and counterpart), Jiulongshan Formation of Daohugou Village, Shantou Township, Ningcheng County, Inner Mongolia, China – latest Middle Jurassic. Housed in the collection of the College of Life Sciences, Capital Normal University, Beijing, China (CNUB, Curator Dong Ren).

Etymology. The name is dedicated to Mr Sun Qian in acknowledgement of his contribution and hard work in raising the collection of fossil materials from Daohugou, Inner Mongolia, China.

Diagnosis. The new species is distinguished from all other species of this genus by differences in colour markings on the wings, and the proportions of some wing veins. *Orthobittacus suni* sp. nov. has three wide, transparent cross-bands on both wings, whereas the wings of *O. polymitus* and *O. maculosus* have transparent oval spots which do not form bands. The new species is distinguished from *O. abshiricus* and *O. polymitus* by six medial veins, and from *O. maculosus* by the position of the forking of Mb, which in both fore and hind wings of this

species is situated opposite mid R_{s3+4}, whilst in *O. suni* sp. nov. it is opposite a point a quarter along the length of R_{s3+4}.

Description. Both wings with well-preserved colour pattern composed of three wide, transparent cross-bands on fore and hind wings.

Forewing. 45 mm long, 14 mm wide, radial sector (Rs) with four veins and medial sector with six veins reaching the outer margin; vein Sc reaching Costa slightly distal to two-thirds wing length and clearly distal to the forking behind forks of Rs into R_{s1+2} and into R_{s3+4}; forking of Rb into R₁ and R_s is positioned significantly beyond the fusion of Mb and Cu₁; forking of Mb in quarter of length of R_{s4+5}; R₁ long, mildly curved in distal section, terminating just distal of half of R_{s1}; R_{s1+2} almost twice as long as R_{s2} and more than twice as long as Rs; R_{s3+4} 1.25 times as long as Rs; R_{s4} almost twice as long as R_{s3+4}; forking of R_{s3+4} into R_{s3} and R_{s4} positioned slightly distal to forking of M₁₊₂; M₁ 1.5 times as long as Mb and 2.33 times as long as M₁₊₂; M₂ forked into M_{2a} and M_{2b}; M_{2a} 1.5 times as long as M_{2b}; M₁₊₂ more than twice as long than M₃₊₄; M₃ forked into M_{3a} and M_{3b}; M₃ a little longer than M_{3a}; two anal veins A₁ and A₂ present.

Hindwing. Slightly narrower than forewing; venation and colour pattern similar to forewing, minor differences as



Figure 4 Habitus of *Orthobittacus suni* sp. nov., holotype, CNN-MEC-NN2016101, female.

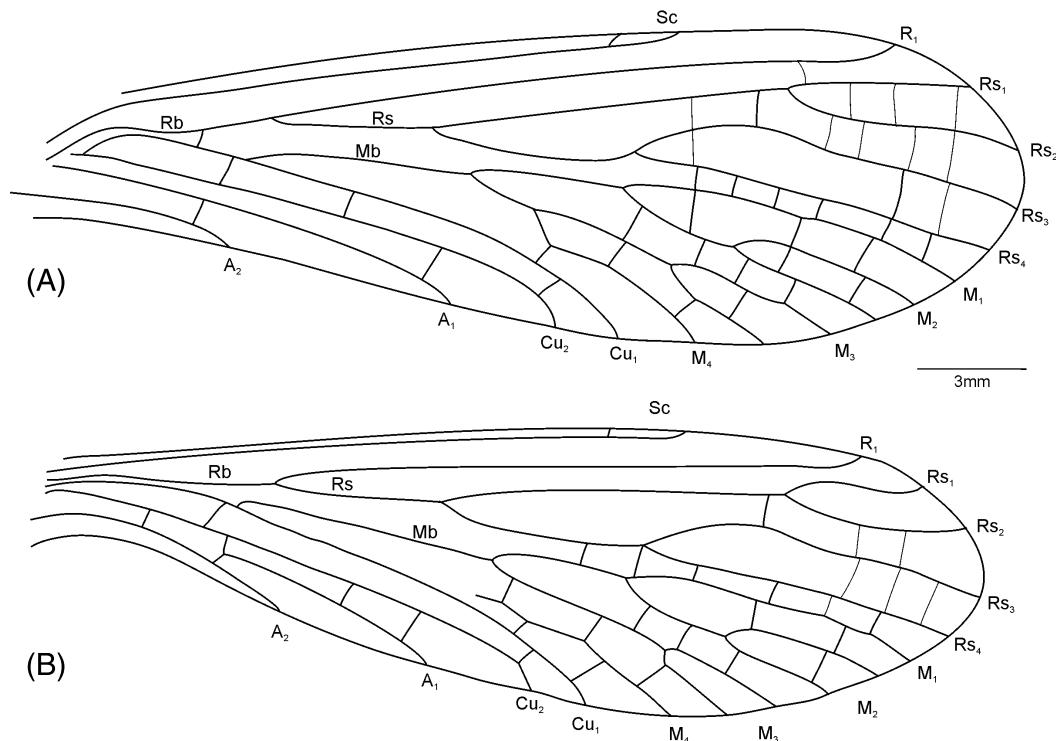


Figure 5 Drawing of both wings of *Orthobittacus suni* sp. nov., holotype, CNN-MEC-NN2016101: (A) fore-wing; (B) hind wing.

follows: R_1 is almost straight, forking of Mb opposite one quarter length of Rs_{4+5} , base of vein M_4 free, and base of A_1 reduced. Abdomen and female genitalia (Fig. 5) well preserved, with subanal plate (1.4 mm \times 1.25 mm), and short cerci (1.75 mm), broad basally (0.9–1 mm).

3. Discussion

Willmann (1989) distinguished the genus *Orthobittacus* based on the long Sc vein. Later, Novokshonov (1996) added the

character of the unusually developed medial sector. Although the long Sc vein occurs also in other fossil genera, such as *Megabittacus* Ren, 1997, *Sibirobittacus* Sukatsheva, 1990, *Plesiobittacus* Novokshonov, 1997a and *Composibittacus* Liu, Shih, Bashkuev & Ren, 2016, the medial sector consists usually of four veins, and rarely of five veins, as in the genus *Probittacus* Martynov, 1927 and *Scharabittacus* Novokshonov, 1993a. Novokshonov (1993b) considered the medial sector consisting of more veins in both wings of the genus *Orthobittacus* to be a plesiomorphic character. Thus, this established this genus

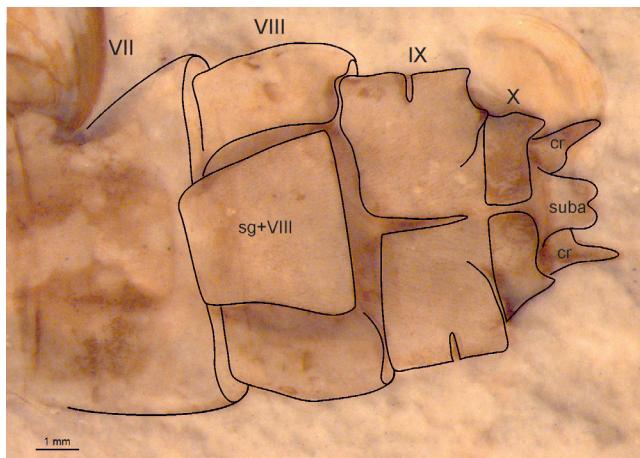


Figure 6 Female abdomen of *Orthobittacus suni* sp. nov., holotype, CNN-MEC-NN2016101. Abbreviations: cr = cerci; sg = subgenital plate; suba = sub-anal plate.

as being at the most basal position of the phylogenetic tree of the Bittacidae, and as a sister group position to all other bittacids (see Fig. 2). The same author, (Novokshonov 1997a) created the new subfamily Plesiobittacinae with the Bittacidae, with one genus, *Plesiobittacus*, and two species: *P. martynovi* Novokshonov and *P. promigenius* Novokshonov. In the same paper, Novokshonov (1997a), considered including the genus *Orthobittacus* in the Plesiobittacinae, but did not do this formally. Bechly & Schweigert (2000) expressed the opinion that both the subfamily Plesiobittacinae and the genus *Orthobittacus* are taxa of uncertain taxonomic position (*seditis mutabilis*).

In summary, the genus *Orthobittacus*, with its plesiomorphic features of the medial sector, is of extraordinary importance for the phylogeny of Bittacidae as the stem taxon.

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