

**Notes on *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay, 1886, with
description of *Lagria gressitti* sp. n.
(Coleoptera, Tenebrionidae: Lagriini)***

by O. MERKL, Budapest

O. MERKL: Notes on *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay, 1886, with description of *Lagria gressitti* sp. n. (Coleoptera, Tenebrionidae: Lagriini). — *Annls hist.-nat. Mus. natn. hung.* 1988 80: 65-69.

Abstract — The lectotype of *Lagria azureipennis* MACLEAY, 1886 is designated. *Lagria gressitti* sp. n. is described (type locality: Bisianumu, Papua New Guinea). With 5 figures.

In a recent revision of the Australian species of *Lagriina* (MERKL 1987: 133) I indicated *Lagria azureipennis* MACLEAY, 1886 to occur in the northernmost tip of Cape York Peninsula and in the Torres Strait islands. In connection with the type material I wrote the following: "MACLEAY (1886) described this species from the Fly River, New Guinea, but none of his type material has been located (...) Macleay's description is quite laconic but leaves little doubt as to what species he had."

The latter statement proved to be premature. Two syntypes of *Lagria azureipennis* were recently found in the material collected by W. W. Froggatt, now housed in the Australian Museum, Sydney, and these made it clear that the specimens taken for *L. azureipennis* represent an entirely different new species. It has to be described hereunder even if this inevitably leads to repetition of the characters listed in the earlier paper.

For the sake of completeness, it should be mentioned that during an earlier stage of my work the specimens were thought to be new species. Later, I felt Macleay's description fitted well the series at hand. This misbelief seemed to be justified by two specimens — one housed in the British Museum (Natural History), and another in the South Australian Museum. Both have been identified as *Lagria azureipennis*. The first has been named by K. G. Blair and this identification was considered authentic.

The abbreviations used to identify the depositories of specimens treated in this paper and the persons who lent the material are the same as in the previous paper (MERKL 1987); those not listed there are as follows:

BPBM — Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu, HI, USA. Dr. G. A. Samuelson.

DPIM — Department of Primary Industries, Mareeba, QLD, Australia. Mr. R. I. Storey.

SPCB — Sedlacek's private collection, Brookfield, QLD, Australia. Mr. J. Sedlacek.

***Lagria azureipennis* MACLEAY, 1886**

Lagria azureipennis MACLEAY, 1886: 157. — *Lagria azureipennis*: BORCHMANN 1910: 7; BORCHMANN 1915: 88; BORCHMANN 1936: 47.

Original description: "Head and thorax metallic green, rather opaque, densely punctate, and about the same length and width. Antennae, palpi and part of the mouth reddish brown. The elytra are of a purplish sapphirine blue, densely and sharply punctate. The pubescence is thin and short in this species, and unusually so for the genus. — Length, 5 lines."

* 6th contribution to the knowledge of *Lagriini*.

Type material — Lectotype, ♀, pinned specimen, labelled as follows: K 30 844 | *Lagria azureipennis* Mcleay [handwritten] | SYNTYPE [red] | Lectotypus ♀ *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay, 1886 des. O. Merkl, 1988 [red]. — Paralectotype, ♀, fragmented specimen, the parts of body being mounted on a card, labelled as follows: K 30 948 | *Lagria azureipennis* Mcleay [handwritten] | SYNTYPE [red] | Paralectotypus ♀ *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay, 1886 des O. Merkl, 1988 [yellow]. — Both lectotype and paralectotype are deposited in the AMSA.

Type locality: Fly River, Papua New Guinea.

Remarks — Both type specimens are females and this fact is especially unfortunate in this case. The females of many species belonging to *Lagria* and other genera are hardly or not at all discernible from one another. I have seen several undescribed *Lagria*-species from New Guinea that have well-distinguishable males, while the females are exactly alike and completely similar to the female of *L. azureipennis* — thus, at the moment I cannot decide which males are to be co-ordinated with the type.

***Lagria gressitti* sp. n. (Figs 1-2, 4-5)**

Lagria azureipennis: MERKL 1987: 123, 128, 132, 160, 161 (misidentification).

Body typical for *Lagria*, elongate, rather slender; head and pronotum metallic blackish-green to blue; scutellum blackish; elytra blue to bluish-violet; ventral surface dark reddish brown; antennal segments I to VIII yellow, segment IX darkling, segments X and XI black; legs black with femoral base reddish; dorsal surface shining; pubescence silvery white. — Length 8.0-12.4 mm.

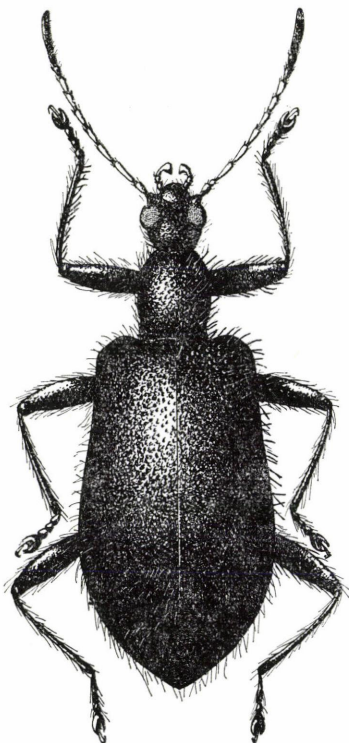


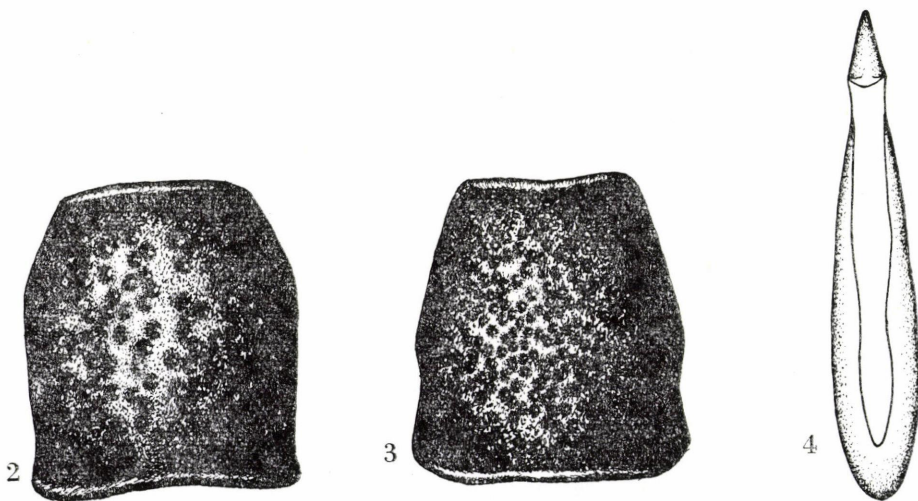
Fig. 1. *Lagria gressitti* sp. n., ♂.

♂. Head coarsely punctate; interocular distance nearly twice as wide as eye diameter; antennae slender; segment length ratios as follows (holotype): 11 : 7 : 14 : 13 : 12 : 11 : 10 : 10 : 10 : 10 : 38; segment I much shorter than half the distance between antennal sockets. — Pronotum a little shorter to a little longer than broad; widest anterior to middle; sides arcuate; punctation very coarse and sparse (Fig. 2); pronotal pubescence long, sparse, semi-erect, directing forwards. — Elytra slightly dilated posteriorly; punctation a little less coarse and slightly denser than that of pronotum; interspaces weakly plicate; elytral pubescence long, sparse, semi-erect, directing backwards, mixed with erect hairs. — Thoracic and abdominal sterna without modifications; ventral pubescence shorter than dorsal, semi-erect. — Legs typical; all tibiae unarmed and nearly straight. — Aedeagus: Fig. 4. — Habitus: Fig. 1.

♀. In general larger and broader; interocular distance more than twice as wide as eye diameter; antennal segment length ratios as follows: 11 : 7 : 14 : 13 : 11 : 11 : 10 : 10 : 10 : 10 : 23; pronotal punctation usually disturbed at middle.

Type material — Holotype, ♂, labelled as follows: Papua New Guinea Bisianumu, E. of Port Moresby 500 m Sept. 24, 1955 | J. L. Gressitt Collector | Holotypus ♂ *Lagria gressitti* Merkl, 1988 [red]. It is deposited in BPBM.

Paratypes (53 specimens; if sex not indicated, it was not studied). — Papua New Guinea, Central Province: labelled as holotype (4♂♂, 1♀, BPBM; 2♂♂, HNHM ex BPBM); id., *Crotalaria* flowers (1♂, 1♀, BPBM); Bisiatabu, Port Moresby, W. N. Lock (1♂, 1♀, SAMA; 1♀, HNHM ex SAMA); Brown River, 20 m, 30. X. 1965, J. & J. H. Sedlacek (1♀, SPCB); id., 2. III. 1966, G. Monteith (1♀, UQIC); id., II. 1975, R. Hornabrook (1♀, HPCW); id., 8–11. III. 1955, lowland rainforest, E. O. Wilson (1♂, MCZC); Laloki, II. 1910, F. Muir (1♂, BPBM); between Laloki R. and Brown R., 35 m, 16. III. 1956, J. L. Gressitt (1♀, BPBM); Moroka, 1000 m, IX–X. 1893, Loria (1♀, MCSN); Port Moresby (1♀, SAMA); id., II. 1975, R. Hornabrook (1♂, HPCW); Port Moresby, Mt. Lawes, 1300 ft, 5. III–12. V. 1963, W. W. Brandt (1♀, ANIC); St. Joseph's River, Sir W. McGregor (1♀, SAMA, formerly identified as *Lagria ?azureipennis* MacL. by unknown); Yule Island, 1905, Fry (1♀, BMNH, identified as *Lagria azureipennis* MacL. by K. G. Blair); id., VI. 1875, L. M. D'Albertis (1♀, MCSN, formerly identified as *Lagria tomentosa* F. by Fr. Borchmann). Northern Province: Popondetta, Sangara, 19. III. 1956, E. S. Brown (3♀♀, BMNH). Western Province: Lake Murray, 11. II. 1974, R. Hornabrook (2♂♂, HPCW; 1♂, HNHM ex HPCW); Mabaduan Hill, 5. X. 1972, malaise trap, Stibick (1♂, 1♀, CNCI); Moorhead, 18 m, 14. VII. 1964, H. Clissold (1♂, BPBM); Rouku, Morehead River, 19. III–28. V. 1962, W. W. Brandt (1♂, ANIC); Fly River, 1876–1877, L. M. D'Albertis (1♀, MCSN). Southern Highlands Province: Lake Kutubu, 2400 ft, 17. II. 1971, R. Hornabrook (1♀, HPCW). — Indonesia, Irian Jaya Province: Etna baai, 1904–05, Dr. Koch (1♀, ZMUA); "Nieuw Guinea" [no closer locality] (1♀, IFPE, formerly identified as *Lagria tomentosa* F. by Fr. Borchmann). Maluku Province: Aru Islands, Maikoor,



Figs 2–4. 2 = pronotum of *Lagria gressitti* sp. n., ♂, 3 = pronotum of *Lagria cyanea* MACLEAY, ♂, 4 = aedeagus of *Lagria gressitti* sp. n., ♂.

Batoe, Bendera, 9. IV. 1908, H. Merton (1, NMSF, register number SMF C 16046); Aru Islands, Maikoor, Wardakan, 18. IV. 1908, H. Merton (1♂, HNHM); Aru Islands, Trangan, Ngaigoeli, 18. II. 1908, H. Merton (1, NMSF, register number SMF C 16045); Aru Islands, Ureiunig, 1884, C. Ribbe (1♂, 1♀, ZMHU, formerly identified as *Lagria tomentosa* F. by Fr. Borchmann); Kei Islands, Vollenhoven (1♂, 1♀, IZWP, formerly identified as *Lagria albovillosa* MacL. by Fr. Borchmann); 1♀, HNHM ex IZWP, formerly identified as *Lagria cyanea* MacL. by Fr. Borchmann); Kei Islands, Klein-Kei, Langgoer, 29. V. 1908, H. Merton (1, NMSF, register number SMF C 16047). — Australia, Queensland: Banks Island, Torres Str., 2. VI. 1965, A. Neboiss (1♂, HNHM; 2, NMVA, formerly identified as *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay by Merkl); id., 22. II. 1979, W. McLennan (1, AMSA, formerly identified as *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay by Merkl); Eet Hill Vicinity, Moa (Banks) Island, Torres Str., 9–13. VII. 1977, G. B. Moteith & D. Cook (2♂♂, 1♀, HNHM; 12, QMBA, register numbers T 11,108–11,119, formerly identified as *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay by Merkl); Cape York Pen., Lockerbie, 9–15. IV. 1985, M. Walford-Huggins (1♀, DPIM, formerly identified as *Lagria ? cyanea* Macleay by T. A. Weir); Lockerbie, Cape York, 6–10. VI. 1969, G. B. Monteith (1♀, HNHM; 2, UQIC, formerly identified as *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay by Merkl); Lockerbie Area, Cape York, 13–27. IV. 1973, G. B. Monteith (2, QMBA, register numbers T 11,120–11,121, formerly identified as *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay by Merkl); Somerset, L. M. D'Albertis (1♂, 1♀, MCSN, formerly identified as *Lagria cyanea* Macleay and *Lagria tomentosa* F. by Fr. Borchmann, and as *Lagria azureipennis* Macleay by Merkl).

Other material (none of them exactly located specimens from New Guinea) — Ighibirei, VII–VIII. 1890, L. Loria (2♀♀, MCSN, formerly identified as *Lagria cyanea* MacL. and *Lagria tomentosa* F. by Fr. Borchmann); Kapakapa, Mag. Giugno, 1891, L. Loria (1♂, MCSN, formerly identified as *Lagria tomentosa* F. by Fr. Borchmann); Katau, L. M. D'Albertis (1♂, MCSN); Papua Golf, E. Weiske (3♀♀, SMTD); Paumotu Riv., IX–XII. 1892, L. Loria (1♀, MCSN, formerly identified as *Lagria cyanea* MacL. by Fr. Borchmann); Weam, VIII. 1976, H. Ohlms (1♂, ANIC).

Remarks — This species clearly differs from *Lagria cyanea* MACLEAY, 1872 in having the pronotum sparser punctate and widest anterior to middle (Fig. 2) (densely punctate and widest at base in *L. cyanea*, Fig. 3) and in having the antennae more slender and largely yellowish (stouter and largely dark in *L. cyanea*). From *Lagria queenslandica* BORCHMANN, 1915, it is distinguished by the blue to violet elytra (black, slightly bronzy in *L. queenslandica*).

Lagria gressitti sp. n. occurs in the New Guinea mainland, the Kai (= Kei) and Aru Islands as well as northernmost Queensland in Australia (Fig. 5).

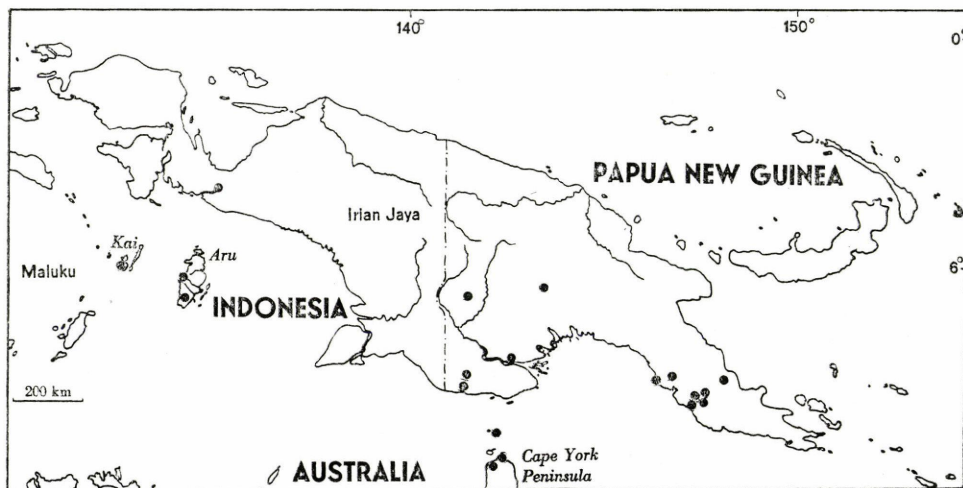


Fig. 5. Traced localities of *Lagria gressitti* sp. n.

The species is named in honour of the late dr. J. Linsley Gressitt, the most renowned and prominent figure of the exploration of the New Guinea biota.

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