A taxonomic review of the genus *Vespula* Thomson (Hymenoptera: Vespidae: Vespinae) from the Indian subcontinent

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Abstract

The genus *Vespula* Thomson, 1869, is reviewed from the Indian subcontinent. New synonymy is *Vespa orbata* var. *aurulenta* du Buysson, 1905, = *Vespula structor* (Smith, 1870). The following species are newly recorded from various states of India as follows: *V. nursei* Archer, 1981, from Delhi, Sikkim and Uttarakhand; *V. orbata* (du Buysson, 1902) from Nagaland; *V. flaviceps* (Smith, 1870) from West Bengal; *V. germanica* (Fabricius, 1793) from Himachal Pradesh; *V. structor* (Smith, 1870) from Arunachal Pradesh; *V. vulgaris* (Linnaeus, 1758) from Himachal Pradesh. Parasitic association of Strepsiptera is observed in one worker specimen of *V. flaviceps*. A modified key to species of the Indian subcontinent is provided.

Keywords: *Vespula*, review, Indian subcontinent, new record, ethology.

Received: 19 December 2017; Revised: 31 May 2018; Online: 1 June 2018.

Introduction

Thomson (1869) erected *Vespula* as a subgenus of *Vespa* based on eight species; the type species *Vespa austriaca* Panzer, 1799, was subsequently designated by Ashmead (1902). Members of this social wasp genus are commonly called yellow jackets. They usually make underground nests. They are widely distributed in the Northern Hemisphere. Currently, 25 species are recorded worldwide of which 10 species are present in the Indian subcontinent. In this paper, we review the Indian subcontinent species. A new synonymy is proposed in this paper, i.e., *Vespa orbata* var. *aurulenta* du Buysson, 1905, is synonymized under *Vespula structor* (Smith, 1870). The distributional records of many species are augmented in this paper. Parasitic association of Strepsiptera is observed in one worker specimen of *V. flaviceps*. A key to species of the Indian subcontinent is also provided.

Materials and Methods

This study is based primarily on the specimens present in the Zoological Survey of India. Most of the specimens were properly preserved and added to the ‘National Zoological Collections’ of the Hymenoptera Section of the Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata (NZC) and some of the specimens at Western Ghat Regional Centre of the Zoological Survey of India, Kozhikode (ZSIK).

List of repositories: Beijing — Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica; Budapest — Hungarian Natural History Museum; Dresden — Staatliches Museum für Tierkunde; Genève — Museum d’Histoire Naturelle; Linnean Society — Linnean Society, London; London — The Natural History Museum; New York — American Museum of Natural History; Paris — Laboratoire d’Entomologie, Museum National d’Histoire Naturelle; Stockholm — Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet (Entomologiska); Taichung — Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute; Washington — U. S. National Museum of Natural History; Wien — Zoologische Sammlung, Naturhistorisches...
Museum; Yunnan — Kunming Natural History Museum of Zoology.

Abbreviations used for the terms: HW = Head width; L = Length; OMS = Oculo-malar space; S = Metasomal sterna; T = Metasomal terga; W = Width.

Results and Discussion

Genus Vespula Thomson, 1869


Pseudovespa Schmiedeknecht, 1881: 314, subgenus of Vespa Linnaeus. Type species: Vespa austriaca Panzer, 1799, by monotypy.


Allovespula Blüthgen, 1943: 149, subgenus of Paravespula Blüthgen. Type species: “Paravespula rufa” [= Vespa rufa Linnaeus, 1758], by monotypy.

Rugovespula Archer, 1982: 261, 264, subgenus of Vespula Thomson. Type species: Vespa koreensis Radoszkowski, 1887, original designation.

Diagnosis: Oculo-malar space short, as short as or shorter than apical diameter of scape; pronotal carina absent or faintly marked ventrally; female with outer flange on mandible; eye almost touching base of mandible; occipital carina present laterally, reaching or not reaching base of mandible, sometimes weak; male antenna with long scape, equal to or little shorter than third flagellar segment, later without tyloids; branches of aedeagus fused resulting in disc-like or saddle-shaped apical lobe; aedeagus longer than parameres.


Key to species of the genus Vespula Thomson from the Indian subcontinent

(Modified from Archer, 2012)

1. T1 usually with long black hairs; occipital carina not extending to base of mandible; lateral mesoscutal depression without a backwardly directed depression; posterolateral margin of S6 of female evenly convex; profile of T7 convex in male; shape of S7 almost triangular in male; male genitalia with digitus small, not extending to level of parameral spine; apex of aedeagus strap-shaped and cuspis cone-shaped, without dorsal lobe…………

rufa species group ………………………2

— T1 usually with long pale hairs; occipital carina usually extending to base of mandible; lateral mesoscutal depression with a backwardly directed depression (sometimes indistinct on workers); posterolateral margin of S6 of female with a backwardly directed projection; profile of T7 concave in male; shape of S7 transversely rectangular in male; male genitalia with digitus large, extending nearly as far as or beyond the level of parameral spine; apex of aedeagus not strap-shaped but either boat-shaped or spoon-shaped and cuspis pyramid-shaped with a dorsal lobe …………………7

2. Hind tibia with long erect hairs; apex of clypeus sharply produced in females, bluntly produced in males. [Worker caste absent]……………………austriaca (Panzer)

— Hind tibia without long erect hairs; apex of clypeus bluntly produced in females, hardly produced at all in males. [Worker caste present]………………………………3

3. Large punctures on mesoscutum with distance between punctures usually more or less equal or less than the diameter of punctures except at middle where punctures are further apart; large punctures of two sizes with normally a single smaller puncture between larger punctures; micropunctures shallow so that surface between them appears polished…………

rufa (Linnaeus) …………………………2

— Large punctures on mesoscutum with distance between punctures usually greater than the diameter of punctures; large punctures of two sizes with normally two smaller punctures between larger punctures; micropunctures deep so that surface between them appears dull………4

4. Females (queens and workers)………………5

— Males……………………………………..6

5. Oculo-malar space short, about 1/20 to 1/25 the width of head; occipital carina long, occupying about 70% of the lateral length………...
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of head; clypeus largely yellow with either each lateral yellow stripe broader than median black stripe or yellow with three black spots; metanotum with two yellow spots. **nursei Archer**

—— Oculo-malar space longer, about 1/14 to 1/17 the width of head; occipital carina short, occupying about 50% of the lateral length of head; clypeus largely black, with each lateral yellow stripe narrower than median black stripe; metanotum without yellow spots. **kingdonwardi Archer**

6. Clypeus more than 50% yellow, black median stripe narrow and/or incomplete; metanotum with two yellow spots; coxa with yellow spot. **nursei Archer**

—— Clypeus less than 50% yellow, black median stripe broad and complete; metanotum without yellow spots; coxa without yellow spot. **kingdonwardi Archer**

7. T1 raised basally with a depression behind this elevation (sometimes indistinct in workers); In female, outer basal flange of mandible nearly straight; In queen, propodeum coarsely rugose all or over major part of its surface; backwardly directed postero-lateral projection on S6 sharply pointed; In worker, either propodeum rugose or if not clearly rugose in dorsal aspect, then body tricolored (black, yellow, brown); lower side of second submarginal cell on the medial vein before the point of contact with second medio-cubital or recurrent vein shorter than the lower side of second submarginal cell after the point of contact with second medio-cubital or recurrent vein; T7 both strongly rugose. **koreensis** (Radoszkowski)

—— Propodeum less coarsely rugose and punctures between and interrupting the rugae; ventral metapleura without strong rugae. **orbata (du Buyssen)**

8. **koreensis species group** ……8

—— T1 not raised basally and without a depression; In female, outer basal flange of mandible strongly curved (sometimes indistinct in workers); In queen, propodeum not coarsely rugose, surface smooth with punctures and only weakly rugose around petiolar junction; backwardly directed postero-lateral projection on S6 bluntly rounded; In worker, propodeum not rugose and in dorsal aspect body bicoloured (black, yellow, brown) except for *V. structor* and some *V. flaviceps* which are tricoloured (black, yellow, brown); lower side of second submarginal cell on the medial vein before the point of contact with the second medio-cubital or recurrent vein as long as or longer than the lower side of second submarginal cell after the point of contact with the recurrent vein; In male, shaft of aedeagus narrow and its apex spoon-shaped; dorsal process of gonostipes well developed and projects laterally; T7 either slightly or not at all notched. **vulgaris species group** ……………13

8. Female (queens and workers)………..9

—— Males………………………..12

9. Queens (usually body length greater than 15.5 mm and forewing length greater than 13 mm).………………………..10

—— Workers (usually body length less than 15.5 mm and forewing length less than 13 mm).………………………..11

10. Propodeum very coarsely rugose all over its surface and without punctures; ventral metapleura anteriorly and ventro-laterally strongly rugose. **koreensis** (Radoszkowski)

—— Propodeum less coarsely rugose and punctures between and interrupting the rugae; ventral metapleura without strong rugae. **orbata (du Buyssen)**

11. Mesoscutal punctures dense with distances between punctures equal to diameter of punctures; propodeum rugose and with punctures between and interrupting the rugae; if the rugae indistinct then the body in dorsal aspect clearly bicoloured (black, yellow)………. **koreensis** (Radoszkowski)

—— Mesoscutal punctures usually less dense with distances between punctures greater than diameter of punctures; propodeum not rugose, only punctate; body in dorsal aspect tricoloured (black, yellow, brown); brown particularly visible on vertex, pronotum and mesoscutum although sometimes restricted in amount…… orbata (du Buyssen)

12. Propodeum rugose, without punctures; dorsal terminal process almost absent, indicated by a slight undulation on margin of gonostipes. **koreensis** (Radoszkowski)

—— Propodeum punctate, without rugae; dorsal terminal process weakly developed but with a distinct projection on margin of gonostipes. **orbata (du Buyssen)**

13. Female (queens and workers)………..14
— Males................................................21
14. Queens (usually body length greater than 13 mm and forewing length greater than 11 mm). .............................................15
— Workers (usually body length less than 13 mm and forewing length less than 11 mm). .....................................................18
15. Occipital carina not extending to base of mandible, usually extends for less than ¾ of lateral length of head; light coloured ocular sinus not deeply penetrated by a medial black projection; black mark on clypeus, if present, usually not reaching apical margin...............flaviceps (Smith)
— Occipital carina extending to base of mandible; other characters partly or completely different. ...........................16
16. Margin behind third mandibular tooth distinctly concave...............germanica (Fabricius)
— Margin behind third mandibular tooth straight or at most slightly concave. .................................................................17
17. Bi-coloured (yellow and black); scutellum and metanotum black, with yellow spots; clypeus yellow with black median mark; ocular-malar space shorter, HW/OMS greater than 19........vulgaris (Linnaeus)
— Tri-coloured (yellow, black and brown); brown colour particularly visible on pronotum, T2 and S2-S4; scutellum and metanotum black, without yellow spots, at most with brown markings; clypeus yellow to orange without a black median mark; ocular-malar space longer, HW/OMS less than 18. ........structor (Smith)
18. Light colour of gastral terga orange yellow; dorsal surface of T1 without or almost without black marking; metanotum without a yellow mark........structor (Smith)
— Light colour of gastral terga yellow; dorsal surface of T1 with a distinct black marking; metanotum with a yellow mark........................19
19. Margin behind third mandibular tooth distinctly concave; lateral surface of mesosoma (mesepisternum, mesepimeron, dorsal and ventral metapleura) with at least some long black hairs; if (rarely) no black hairs present, then long hairs white. .........................germanica (Fabricius)
— Margin behind third mandibular tooth straight or at most slightly concave; other characters partly or completely different. ..................................................20
20. Occipital carina incomplete only extending just over half way from vertex to mandible; yellow area of ocular sinus with a slightly convex medial margin and slightly separated from yellow shield of frons...............vulgaris (Linnaeus)
— Occipital carina complete, extending from vertex to mandible, but disappearing for a short distance near mandible and then reappearing and reaching to mandible; yellow area of ocular sinus with a concave medial margin and widely separated from yellow shield of frons...............vulgaris (Linnaeus)
21. Aedeagus without a small backwardly directed pointed barb on each side below the apical spoon-shaped region; aedeagus emarginated apically; aedeagus with a small semicircular projection on each side below apical spoon-shaped region; dorsal terminal process of gonostipes equal to, or less than width of shaft of aedeagus. ..............................germanica (Fabricius)
— Aedeagus with a small backwardly directed pointed barb on each side below the apical spoon-shaped region; aedeagus rounded apically; other characters partly or completely different. ........................22
22. Volsella visible in ventral view of gonostipes; light coloured area of ocular sinus not deeply penetrated by a medial black projection, medial margin straight or convex or continuous with the light coloured area of frons; mandible without a triangular black spot at its base; genitalia short, L/W less than one........flaviceps (Smith)
— Volsella not visible in ventral view of gonostipes; other characters partly or completely different. .................................23
23. Gastral terga not covered by short brown hairs so that the light coloured areas appear clear yellow; metanotum with yellow spots; light coloured areas of frons and ocular sinus parallel, or diverging dorsally, so that they are clearly separated. .........................vulgaris (Linnaeus)
— Gastral terga covered by short brown hairs so that the light coloured areas appear orange-brown; metanotum without yellow spots; light coloured areas of frons and ocular sinus either continuous or only narrowly separated........structor (Smith)

The rufa species group
Four species of *rufa* species group, namely, *Vespa austriaca* (Panzer, 1799), *V. rufa* (Linnaeus, 1758), *V. nursei* Archer, 1981 and *V. kingdonwardi* Archer, 1981, are present in the Indian subcontinent.

1. **Vespa austriaca** (Panzer, 1799)

*Vespa austriaca* Panzer, 1799: 2, fig. 2, male, “Viiennae Austr.” (destroyed).


*Vespa arborea* Smith, 1849: 1x. Replacement name for *Vespa borealis* Smith.

*Vespa biloba* Schilling, 1850: 77, [Poland] “Schlesien” (type depository unknown).

*Vespa arborea* “Ross” Dalla Torre, 1894: 138, as a synonym of *Vespa austriaca* Panzer. Junior primary homonym of *Vespa arborea* Smith, 1849.

**Diagnosis:** Female: Apex of clypeus sharply produced; occipital carina present only laterally; mesoscutum and scutellum dull with sparse shallow punctures; metanotum dull with fine shallow punctures; metasoma dull; body covered with long black erect hairs; hind tibia with characteristic long erect hairs; clypeus usually with 2-3 black spots; scape yellow ventrally; ocular sinus yellow at ventral side; metasoma without reddish areas.

**Male:** Apex of clypeus bluntly produced; genitalia with basal part of aedeagus narrower than the apical part, the apex evenly rounded and without lateral projections, but with subapical constriction; volsella short, extending only up to the base of the apical part; aedeagus entirely light brown.

**Length:** Female, 15-18 mm; male, 13-16 mm.

**Ethology:** It is an obligatory parasite that does not construct its own nest and breeds in the nests of other *Vespa* species such as *V. nursei*, *V. acadica* and *V. rufa* (Williams, 1988; Archer, 2007). It does not produce a worker caste.

**Material examined:** No specimens from the Indian subcontinent were available for our studies. We compared the species description from Das and Gupta (1989) with a queen from Suisse - Valais/Grimentz/13 VII - 2 VIII 1941/L. de Beaumont, and a male from Germany and Coll. Konow without further data (New York).

**Distribution:** India: Jammu & Kashmir; Pakistan. Elsewhere: Albania; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Canada; China; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyzstan; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia; Moldova; Mongolia; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russia; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; U. K.; Ukraine.

2. **Vespa rufa** (Linnaeus, 1758)


*Vespa schrenckii* Radoszkowski, 1861: 84, figs. 4-5, [Russia] “Amur” (type depository unknown).

*Vespa sibirica* André, 1884: 599, female, male, [Russia] “Sibérie” (Paris?).

*Vespa schrencki*; Dalla Torre, 1904: 66. Incorrect spelling of *Vespa schrenckii* Radoszkowski.

*Vespa rufa* grahami Archer, 1981: 54, 62, female, male – “CHINA, Szechuen, 30 miles north of Tatsienku” (Washington); also from elsewhere in Sichuan.

*Vespa obscura* Lee, 1986: 201, 205, 206, fig. 5, female – [China] “Zogang County, Xizang (Tibet) Aut. Reg., 3800 m” (Beijing); also from another locality in Xizang.


*Vespa yulongensis* Dong and Wang, 2002, in Dong et al.: 396, figs. 1-5, female - “Yunnan China” (Yunnan).


**Diagnosis:** Female: Large punctures on mesoscutum with distance between punctures...
usually more or less equal or less than the diameter of punctures except at middle where punctures further apart; large punctures of two sizes with normally a single smaller puncture between larger punctures; micropunctures shallow so that the surface between them appears polished; metanotum and metasoma more shiny with finer micro sculpture and more superficial punctuation; tibiae with sparse hairs; a dagger-shaped mark on clypeus; T1 and T2 partly red. 

**Male:** Aedeagus not constricted basally, its basal part with thick walls; T1 and T2 with red spots.

**Material examined:** No specimens from the Indian subcontinent were available for our studies. We compared the species description from Das and Gupta (1989) with a queen from Europe without further data, two workers from Bressoux/Belgium/22/7/52 and Tolumierz/22/X/1990/E. Yildirim, and two males from Tolumierz/22/X/1990/E. Yildirim and Maele W/Brugge/Belgium (New York).

**Distribution:** Nepal. Elsewhere: Afghanistan; Albania; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; China; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Korea; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia; Moldova; Mongolia; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russia; Serbia; Slovenia; Slovakia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Taiwan; Tajikistan; Turkey; U.K.; Ukraine; Uzbekistan.

(Figs. 1-12)

*Vespula nursei* Archer, 1981: 54, 57, fig. 4B, female, male. “INDIA, Kashmir, 8-9,000 ft” (holotype female London); also from other localities in Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh; China; Philippines.

**Diagnosis:** Female: Oculo-malar space short, about 1/20 to 1/25 the width of head; clypeus with coarse punctures separated by more than their diameters; lateral angles of clypeus triangular and projecting outwards; occipital carina long, occupying about 70% of lateral length of head; pronotal carina absent; pronotum punctate and weakly striate ventrally; large punctures on mesoscutum with distance between punctures usually greater than the diameter of punctures; large punctures of two sizes with normally two smaller punctures between larger punctures; micropunctures deep so that surface between them appears dull; propodeum punctate, weakly striate ventro-laterally; apical margin of S6 evenly convex.

**Colour:** Head black with yellow marks as follows: most of clypeus except linear black mark medially; frons with a shield reaching antennal bases; stripe along ocular sinus extending to clypeus; mandible; small spot posteriorly and large linear mark anteriorly on gena. Mesosoma black with yellow marks as follows: stripe on pronotum parallel sided; tegula; spot just below hind wing; two spots on scutellum; metanotum with two spots anteriorly; triangular spot on meseptisternum. Legs with coxae black or dark brown with small yellow spot; femur mainly light brown; tibia and tarsus brown with yellow dorsal marks. Metasoma with black, reddish brown and pale yellow marks as in figure 6. Body hairs long and black; legs with long black hairs on coxa, trochanter and femur.

**Male:** Clypeal angles absent, apical margin of clypeus almost straight; antennal tyloids absent; apical margin of S6 deeply concave; S7 almost triangular. Colouration similar to that of female except as follows: clypeus almost completely yellow except narrow black median stripe; gena with anterior yellow stripe along its entire length.

**Length** (H+M+T1+T2): Queen, 12.5-13.5 mm; Worker, 9.5-10.5 mm; Male, 9.5-11.5 mm.

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Distribution: India: Delhi (new record), Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Sikkim (new record), Uttarakhand (new record); Pakistan. Elsewhere: China; Philippines.


Vespula kingdonwardi Archer, 1981: 54, 57 (key), 60, fig. 4C-D, female, male – [China] “TIBET, Kashmir, 28.25 N 97.55 E” (holotype female London); also from other localities in Xizang; Myanmar.

Vespula hirsuta Lee, 1986: 201, 204, 206, fig. 4, female – [China] “Markham County, Xizang (Tibet) Aut. Reg., 3300 m” (Beijing).

Diagnosis: Female: Oculo-malar space longer, about 1/14 to 1/17 the width of head; occipital carina shorter, occupying about 50% of the lateral length of head; large punctures on mesoscutum with distance between punctures usually greater than the diameter of punctures; large punctures of two sizes with normally two smaller punctures between larger punctures; micropunctures deep so that surface between them appears dull.

Colour: Head black with yellow marks as follows: clypeus largely black with lateral narrow yellow stripes; frons with a shield reaching antennal bases; a stripe along ocular sinus not extending to clypeus; Mesosoma black with yellow marks as follows: a stripe on pronotum parallel sided; tegula brown with spots. Metasoma black with reddish brown and yellow markings; vertical face of T1 reddish brown with dorsal and ventral black marks. Body hairs long and black; legs with long black hairs on coxa, trochanter and femur.

Male: Clypeal angles absent, apical margin of clypeus truncate; antennal tyloids absent; apical margin of T7 not notched, convex in profile; apical margin of S6 concave; S7 almost triangular; genitalia like that of V. rufa and V. nursei. Colouration similar to that of female except gena with anterior yellow stripe along its entire length.

Length: Queen, 17 mm; Worker, 12-13.2 mm; Male, 13-14.7 mm.


Remarks: Specimens of this species was not available for our studies; hence the species diagnosis, colour description and length are taken from Das & Gupta (1989).

The koreensis species group

This species group consists of only three species, namely, Vespula koreensis (Radoszkowski, 1887), V. orbata (du Buysson, 1902) and V. arisana (Sonan, 1929) of which the first two species are present in the Indian subcontinent.

5. Vespula koreensis (Radoszkowski, 1887)


Vespula koreensis salebrosa Archer, 1982: 261, 267, female. “CHINA: Szechuen, Suifu” (London); also from other localities in China.


Diagnosis: T1 raised basally with a depression behind this elevation (sometimes indistinct in workers). Female (queens and workers): outer basal flange of mandible nearly straight. In queen, propodeum very coarsely rugose all over its surface and without punctures; ventral metapleuron anteriorly and ventro-laterally strongly rugose; backwardly directed postero-
Figs 1-6: *Vespula nursei* Archer, worker. 1: Body, in profile. 2: Head, in frontal view. 3: Head, in lateral view. 4: Head and mesosoma, in dorsal view. 5: Wings. 6: Metasoma, dorsal view.
Figs: 7-12: *Vespula nursei* Archer, male. 7: Body, in profile. 8: Head, in frontal view. 9: Antenna. 10: Head and mesosoma in dorsal view. 11: Metasomal tergum. 12: Metasomal sternum.
lateral projection on S6 sharply pointed. In worker, mesoscutal punctures dense with distances between punctures equal to diameter of punctures, less dense on centre and denser on lateral margins; margin behind inner mandibular tooth distinctly concave; occipital carina reaches base of mandible; lower side of second submarginal cell on the medial vein before the point of contact with the second medio-cubital or recurrent vein shorter than the lower side of second submarginal cell after the point of contact with the recurrent vein.

**Male:** Propodeum rugose, without punctures; genitalia with dorsal terminal process almost absent, indicated by a slight undulation on margin of gonostipes; dorsal terminal process of gonostipes weakly developed; parameral spine gradually narrowing to an apical point; the shaft of aedeagus broad and its apex boat-shaped; T7 deeply notched.

**Length:** Queen, usually greater than 15.5 mm; Workers, usually less than 15.5 mm.

**Material examined:** No specimens from the Indian subcontinent were available for our studies. We compared the species description from Archer (2012) with two queens from Foochow China/Kellogg coll. and Yen-ping, China/IV.16.1917/Ac. 5148, and two workers from Yen-ping, China/X.11.1917/Ac. 5148 and VII.10.1917 (New York).

**Distribution:** India: Meghalaya, Sikkim; Myanmar. Elsewhere: China; Korea; Laos; Russia; Thailand; Vietnam.

6. *Vespa orbata* (du Buysson, 1902)  
(Figs. 13-18)


*Vesula nuijiangensis* Dong and Wang, 2004, in Dong et al., 146, female, figs. 1-5 - [China] “Nuijiang Liuku, Yunnan, Alt. 1 100 m. 25°58’ North 98°65’ East.” (Yunnan).

**Diagnosis:** T1 raised basally with a depression behind this elevation (sometimes indistinct in workers). **Female** (queens and workers): outer basal flange of mandible nearly straight. In queens, propodeum less coarsely rugose and punctures between and interrupting the rugae; ventral metapleuron without strong rugae; backwardly directed postero-lateral projection on S6 sharply pointed. In workers, mesoscutal punctures usually less dense with distances between punctures greater than diameter of punctures, less dense on centre and denser on lateral margins; propodeum not rugose, only punctate; margin behind inner mandibular tooth distinctly concave; occipital carina reaches base of mandible; lower side of second submarginal cell on the medial vein before the point of contact with the second medio-cubital or recurrent vein shorter than the lower side of second submarginal cell after the point of contact with the recurrent vein.

**Male:** Propodeum punctate, without rugae; genitalia with dorsal terminal process weakly developed but with a distinct projection on margin of gonostipes; the shaft of aedeagus broad and its apex boat-shaped; T7 deeply notched.

**Colour** (Worker): Body dorsally tricoloured: black, brown and yellow. Head yellowish brown with vertex darker; mesoscutum brown except black posteriorly; scutellum yellowish brown with a black mark in the middle; metanotum largely black and with a narrow brownish yellow line across its anterior margin; mesepisternum and usually the mesepimeron with a brown spot; propodeum black with two lateral brownish yellow spots; fore leg yellowish brown with coxa, trochanter and femur dorsally blackish brown; middle and hind legs blackish brown with apex of femur dorsally and tarsus yellowish; T1, T2 and S2 black or blackish brown with a yellow apical band; T3–T5 black basally and with wider apical yellowish brown bands; T6 wholly yellowish brown; S3–S6 largely yellowish brown.

**Length** (H+M+T1+T2): Worker, 10.5-11.5 mm.

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**Plate 3**

**Distribution:** India: Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland (new record), Sikkim, Uttarakhand, West Bengal; Nepal: Sundarijal; Myanmar. *Elsewhere:* China; Thailand; Laos; Vietnam. This species was previously recorded by other workers from “Uttar Pradesh: Mussoorie” and from “Assam: Mishmi Hills”. The locality Mussoorie presently belongs to Uttarakhand state and the locality Mishmi Hills presently belongs to Arunachal Pradesh.

**The vulgaris species group**

Four species of this species group, namely, *Vespa flaviceps* (Smith, 1870), *V. germanica* (Fabricius, 1793), *V. structor* (Smith, 1870) and *V. vulgaris* (Linnaeus, 1758) are present in the Indian subcontinent.

7. *Vespula flaviceps* (Smith, 1870)

(Figs. 19-36)


*Vespa Saussurei* Schulz, 1906: 231. Replacement name for *Vespa japonica* de Saussure.


*Vespula japonica pionganensis* Giordani Soika, 1976: 287, 290, female (in subgenus *Vespula*). [Korea] “Za-mosan, 60 km NE from Pyongan” (Budapest); also from other localities in Korea.

*Vespa vulgaris* var. *flavor*; Das & Gupta, 1984: 449. Incorrect spelling of *Vespa vulgaris* var. *flavor* Stolfa.

*Vespula gracilis* Lee, 1986: 201, 203, 206, fig. 2, female. [China] “Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province” (Beijing); also from Fujian.

**Diagnosis:** Queens: occipital carina not extending to base of mandible, usually extends for less than ¾ of lateral length of head; light coloured ocular sinus not deeply penetrated by a medial black projection; black mark on clypeus, if present, usually not reach apical margin. Workers: pale markings ivory-white; light coloured ocular sinus not deeply penetrated by a medial black projection; black mark on clypeus rarely reaches its apical margin. Males: volsella visible in ventral view of gonostipes; light coloured area of ocular sinus not deeply penetrated by a medial black projection, medial margin straight or convex or continuous with the light coloured area of frons; mandible without a triangular black spot at its base; genitalia short, L/W less than one.

**Colour:** Body markings highly variable in queen and worker. Yellow usually paler, approaching ivory white. Head yellowish except frons and vertex black; clypeus usually yellow, rarely with a basal black line, or this line divided in to three spots; genal band complete; antenna black with scape yellow to yellowish brown ventrally; mesosoma black except following yellow markings: posterior margin of pronotum; spot under wing base; anterior half of scutellum; anterior margin of metanotum; a pair of spots on propodeum; gaster black with yellow bands that are darker than mesosomal markings; legs largely yellowish. Male similar to worker in colouration.

**Length:** Queen, 13-15 mm. Worker, 8-9 mm. Male, 13-14 mm.

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Plate 4

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Plate 6

Figs 31-36: *Vespula flaviceps* (Smith), male. 31: Body, in profile. 32: Head, in frontal view. 33: Antenna. 34: Head and mesosoma, in dorsal view. 35: Metasomal tergum. 36: Metasomal sternum.


Ethology: Parasitic association of Strepsiptera was observed in one worker specimen collected in Himachal Pradesh. The female strepsipteran extruded out from the third tergite of the wasps as seen in the figure 30.

Distribution: India: Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Punjab, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, West Bengal (new record); Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan. Elsewhere: China; Japan (including Amami Is. In Ryukyu Is.); Korea; Laos; Russia; Taiwan; Thailand; Vietnam.

8. Vespa germanica (Fabricius, 1793) (Figs. 37-48):

Vespa maculata Scopoli, 1763, 312, [Slovenia] “Carnioliae” (destroyed?).

Junior primary homonym of Vespa maculata Linnaeus, 1763.

Vespa macularis Olivier, 1792: 695.

Unjustified emendation of Vespa maculata Scopoli.


Diagnosis: Queen and Worker: Margin behind third mandibular tooth distinctly concave; outer basal flange of mandible strongly curved; occipital carina reaching mandibular base; apical margin of clypeus concave and depressed medially; mesosomal punctures indistinct; propodeum not rugose.

Colour: Body black with yellow markings as follows: mandible except teeth brown; clypeus; shield on lower frons; occular sinus (in queen, yellow mark on frons connected to that of ocular sinus); area between antennal toruli and inner eye margin; temple; broad mark on pronotum; two marks on either sides of scutellum and metanotum; triangular mark on mesopleuron near to forewing; small spots on either sides of propodeum; tegula; mark behind base of hindwing; mark on mid and hind coxa; apical half of all femora; all tibia and tarsus entirely; dorsal side of T1 except...
extended black mark at middle (large) and at sides (small); T2-T5 except at base black which triangularly extends towards apex at middle and separate small spots on either sides; S2-S5 except basal black area which extends to apex at middle and both sides; T6 and S6 entirely.

**Length**: Queen, 14.5 mm; Worker, 8-12 mm.


**Distribution**: India: Himachal Pradesh (new record), Jammu & Kashmir; Nepal; Pakistan. Elsewhere: Afghanistan; Albania; Algeria; Armenia; Argentina (Introduced); Ascension Island (Introduced); Australia (Introduced); Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Canada (Introduced); Chile (Introduced); China; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland (Introduced); Iran; Iraq; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyzstan; Lebanon; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia; Malta; Mayotte; Moldova; Mongolia; Morocco; Netherlands; New Zealand (Introduced); Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russia; Sakhalin Island; Scotland; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; South Africa (Introduced); Spain (including Canary Islands); Sweden; Switzerland; Syria; Taiwan; Tajikistan; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; U.K.; Ukraine; U.S.A. (Introduced); Uzbekistan.

9. **Vespa structor (Smith, 1870)**

(Figs. 49-60)

**Vespa structor** Smith, 1870, in Horne and Smith, 191, pl. XXI fig. 12, female — “Binsur, Kumaon, North-west Provinces of India” (London).

**Vespa orbata var. aurulenta** du Buysson, 1905: 579, female, “Chine, Mou-pin ... ; Amur” (Paris, Wien?). NEW SYNONYMY.1

**Vespa structrix** Schulz, 1906: 231. Unjustified emendation of **Vespa structor** Smith. **Vespa gongshanensis** Dong 2005, in Dong et al.: 65, female, male – “China, Gongshan, Yunnan Province, alt. 2,950” (holotype female Yunnan).

**Diagnosis**: Queen: Tri-colored (yellow, black and brown); brown colour particularly visible on pronotum, T2 and S2-S4; scutellum and metanotum black, without yellow spots, at most with brown markings; clypeus yellow to orange without a black median mark; ocular-malar space longer, HW/OMS less than 18; margin behind third mandibular tooth straight or at most slightly concave; occipital carina extend to base of mandible. Workers: Light colour of gastral terga orange yellow; dorsal surface of T1 without or almost without black marking; metanotum without a yellow mark.


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1 One of us (JMC) has seen a specimen from Mou-pin in Paris, with a determination label by du Buysson, a label reading “Type/examined by/Dr. J. v. d. Vecht 1956” and a determination label as *Paravespula structor* Sm. ab. by I. H. Yarrow. 1958. The determination appears to be correct, which represents revised synonymy for this taxon. JMC checked for material in Vienna, but only found an empty labeled space in the collection.
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Plate 8

Figs 43-48: *Vespula germanica* (Fabricius), Worker. 43: Body, in profile. 44: Head, in frontal view. 45: Head and mesosoma, in dorsal view. 46: Apical half of forewing. 47: Metasomal tergum. 48: Metasomal sternum.
Figs 49-54: *Vespula structor* (Smith), Queen. 49: Body, in profile. 50: Head, in frontal view. 51: Ocellar area. 52: Head and mesosoma, in dorsal view. 53: Apical half of forewing. 54: Metasoma, in dorsal view.
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Plate 10


**Distribution:** India: Arunachal Pradesh (new record), Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, West Bengal; Nepal; Myanmar. Elsewhere: China; Laos;
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Thailand.

10. *Vespula vulgaris* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Figs. 61-66)


*Vespa sexcincta* Panzer, 1799: 1, fig. 1, male – “Viennae Austr.” (destroyed).

*Vespa vulgaris* var. *pseudogermanica* Stolfa, 1932: 26 (key), female – [Italy] “Lago superior di Weissenfels (Tarvisio … Senosecchia” (type depository unknown).


*Vespula rufosignata* Eck, 1998: 299, female, figs. 1A, C. 2 - “India: Kashmir, Gulmarg, 2900 m” (type depository not stated; London); also from two other localities.

*Vespula vulgaris* *vetus* Eck, 1999: 309, 329, female, male - “China, Qinghai Prov., Datong-Tal, 120 km NE Xining, 2360 m” (holotype female Dresden); also from five other localities.

*Vespula yunlongensis* Dong and Wang, 2003, in *Dong et al.*: 212, fig. 1, female [?] - “Yunnan, China” (Yunnan).

**Diagnosis**: Worker. Occipital carina complete, extending from vertex to mandible, but disappear for a short distance near to mandible and then reappear and reaching to mandible; yellow area of ocular sinus with a concave medial margin and widely separated from yellow shield of frons; margin behind third mandibular tooth almost straight.

**Colour**: Body black with yellow markings as follows: mandible except teeth brown; clypeus except an anchor-shaped black mark; shield on lower frons; ocular sinus; area between antennal toruli and inner eye margin; temple except wide black interruption; narrow mark on pronotum; two marks on either sides of scutellum and metanotum; triangular mark on mesopleuron; spots on either sides of propodeum; tegula; small mark behind base of hindwing; mark on mid and hind coxa; apical half of all femora; all tibia and tarsus entirely; apical half of dorsal side of T1, band medially invaginated; apex of T2-T5, anterior side with irregular zigzag margin; apex of S2-S5 with almost regular band, narrowed towards sides; outer margin of T6; visible part of S6 almost entirely.

**Length**: worker, 12.5 - 13.5 mm.


**Distribution**: India: Himachal Pradesh (new record), Jammu & Kashmir; Pakistan. Elsewhere: Albania; Argentina (Introduced); Australia (Introduced); Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Chile (Introduced); China; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; French Polynesia (Introduced); Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland (Introduced); Iran; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kurile Islands; Kyrgyzstan; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia; Mexico; Moldova; Mongolia; Netherlands; New Zealand (Introduced); Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russia; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; South Africa (Introduced); Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Syria; Turkey; U.K.; Ukraine.

**Acknowledgements**

The authors are grateful to Dr. Kailash Chandra, Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, and Dr. P.M. Sureshan, Officer-in-Charge, Western Ghats Regional Centre, Zoological Survey of India, Kozhikode, for providing facilities and encouragement.

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