



***Leptopilina rufipes* (Hymenoptera) from India with a likely host record**

Leptopilina Förster, 1869 (Eucoilinae: Figitidae: Cynipoidea) are solitary larval-pupal parasitoids of drosophilid flies, mainly frugivorous species of the genus *Drosophila* Fallen 1823 (Novkovic, 2011). The genus is cosmopolitan in distribution, with representations in all major biogeographic realms (Nordlander, 1980). *Leptopilina* species and their hosts are among the best studied host-parasitoid systems (Schilthuizen, 1998).

A *Leptopilina rufipes* (Cameron, 1908) female (Fig. 1) was observed antennating and ovipositing on a ripe guava on the evening of 29 June 2014 at Kolassery, Kannur, Kerala (11.77063°N, 75.49491°E, alt. 23 m asl.), India. In an attempt to collect the wasp, the fruit being over-ripe was dislodged and got scattered on the ground. The wasp however remained on a piece of the fruit as such, surviving the fall. The scattered pieces of the fruit along with the wasp were kept in a transparent plastic bottle with its mouth covered with a white cotton cloth and kept for rearing. The female wasp was however removed from the culture, the following day. The bottle was checked regularly for wasp emergence. The emergence started on day 3 onwards and within a week, a total of 10 *Leptopilina* wasps (7 males and 3 females) emerged. Males were the first to emerge. Since the emergence started on day 3 and continued for consecutive days till day 6, it can be presumed that the ripe guava, while collecting itself, had in it parasitised dipteran host stages undergoing different development levels. Host emergence was limited to just one instance, with a single specimen of *Drosophila* sp. emerged on day 4. All specimens (5) were preserved in 70% alcohol and were later card mounted for taxonomic studies (catalog numbers: ZSI/WGRS/IR.INV. 4001, 4353–4356). The Eucoilinae wasps were identified as *Leptopilina*

rufipes using Nordlander (1980) and the drosophilid fly, with the help of Bryan (1938). In the light of the host of *L. rufipes* being unknown till this date, and since Novkovic (2011) raised a suggestion that *L. rufipes* might not be a parasitoid of frugivorous drosophilids, the present observation gains significance. This study adds evidence for *Drosophila* sp. as a likely host of *L. rufipes*, and also documents additional record of a species and a genus to the country- species *rufipes* as well as genus *Leptopilina* is first records to India. So far *L. rufipes* is known only from Borneo (Nordlander, 1980).



Figure 1: *Leptopilina rufipes* female profile

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