

Distinguishing characters of *Sternodontus binodulus* Jak. and *S. similis* (Stål) (Heteroptera: Pentatomidae)

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Though external characters of *S. similis* and *S. binodulus* overlap, these species are separate and clearly differ in the shape of the paramere hypophysis and structure of spermatheca.

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Kulik (1965) synonymized *Sternodontus binodulus* Jakovlev, 1893 with *S. similis* (Stål, 1854), but Petrova (1975) considered them separate species. My data based on the collection of Zoological Institute, St. Petersburg, confirm Petrova's opinion.

The paramere hypophysis of *S. similis* (caudal view!) has a long and thin lateral process; the external margin of hypophysis between its lateral and anterior processes forms an obtuse angle (Fig. 1). In *S. binodulus*, the lateral process of hypophysis is somewhat shorter and wider and its external margin forms a weakly curved arc (Fig. 2).

The variability of external characters of the two species overlaps. Usual states of characters for each species are listed below. Lateral margins of head of *S. similis* before eyes converge narrow-parabolically and the apex of its head is narrowly rounded, whereas the head of *S. binodulus* before eyes is with parallel lateral margins and

more widely rounded apex. Tubercles just behind calloused eminences of internal carinae on the pronotum are larger in *S. binodulus* than in *S. similis*. Median carina and apical portions of external lateral carinae are usually more distinct in *S. binodulus* than in *S. similis*.

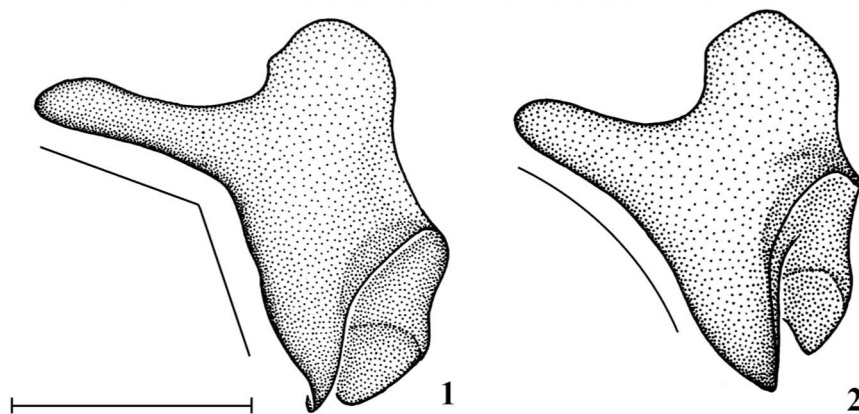
Acknowledgements

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Figs 1-2. *Sternodontus*, paramere, caudal view. 1, *S. similis*; 2, *S. binodulus*. Scale: 0.25 mm.