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Identification key to European genera of the Mymaridae (Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea), with additional notes

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Abstract. A key to genera of the Mymaridae occurring in Europe is given. The European genera of the Mymaridae is briefly reviewed. *Ptilomymar* Annecke & Doutt is identified and reported for the first time from Europe. *Pseudocleruchus* Donev & Huber is introduced for the first time in an identification key. In the key are included 20 fairy fly genera. Some faunistic data is also added. **Key Words**: Mymaridae, key to genera, taxonomy, *Ptilomymar*, *Pseudocleruchus*, Europe.

Introduction. Fairy flies are small wasps, many species being smaller than 0.5 mm. Almost all are smaller than 3 mm. The general color can be black, brown or reddish brown, with various shades of yellow or white. In general the Mymaridae (Figures 1-6) and Mymarommatidae (Figure 4g) are small insects that present interest in terms of systematics, taxonomy, biology and ecology. Although mymarommatids like *Mymaromella* sp. (Figure 4g) or *Palaeomymar anomalum* resemble the mymarids (the true fairy flies), they are probably at most sister groups (regarding Mymarommatoidea as a sister group to Chalcidoidea). The mymarommatids are considered to be false fairy flies.

The Mymaridae belong to the Superfamily Chalcidoidea, Ord. Hymenoptera – Subord. Apocrita, (Cls. Insecta). All the Mymaridae are believed to be internal, primary parasitoids, especially of insect eggs. There are more than 1420 described species of Mymaridae, grouped in more than 102 genera. In Europe there are more than 450 valid species (Noyes 2003). Fairy flies are spread in almost all ecosystem types. The Mymaridae are found in many habitat types, from terrestrial to aquatic.

Morphology: the mymarid head generally has a vertical disposition; its shape can be trapezoidal and a transverse trabecula (frontal suture) or carina (Figures 5a, 5i, 5j) is always present. The toruli are always near the inner margin of eyes.

The mouth parts are for licking, breaking and sucking; some parts are generally much smaller (reduced) and in a less varied form in many genera; the usual fluctuations involve the tooth number and shape of the mandibles etc. The maxillary and labial palps are reduced to only a basal article with one or more than one setae. Cardo is reduced; the stipes is enlarged and almost ovoid; lacinia is reduced to almost absent; galea well developed with many sensilae. A small and boat-shaped mentum is present, at the apex of mentum there is a small glossa. On the glossa are present only two sensilae (base-conic like sensilae).

The antennae (in females), are long and slender and consists of 5 sectors: the radicle, the scapus (longer than the radicle), the pedicel (ovoid in shape), the funicle (consists in general of 5 to 8 articles; F1 - F8) and clava or club (1, 2 or 3 - segmented).

Fairy fly mesosoma has in general the characteristic appearance of Hymenoptera – Apocrita, but can vary from genus to genus. Mesoscutum always with parapsidal grooves. Mesosoma shelters the phragma, which is a strong hemi-conical structure (spoon-like). Phragma can or cannot project into gaster. Fairy flies have large wings

relative to their body size, but there are species which can be brachypterous or wingless. All wing veins are reduced. Wings usually have long marginal cilia. Legs can have 3, 4 or 5-segmented tarsi (3-segmented tarsi are recorded only from the genus *Kikiki* Huber & Beardsley). The metasoma in females consists of 9 segments. The first metasomal segment is the propodeum, fused with the mesosoma; the second segment is strongly narrowed forming the petiolus or is wide like the other metasomal segments.

A total of 20 fairy fly genera are recorded from Europe.

Regarding past identification keys to the genera of the Mymaridae, relevant contributions have been brought by: Annecke & Doutt (1961), Ashmead (1904), Beardsley & Huber (2000), Debauche (1948, 1949), Girault (1929), Guzman-Larralde et al (2001), Huber (1997), Huber et al (2009), Kryger (1950), Lin & Xu (2000), Lin et al (2007), Luft Albarracin et al (2009), Mathot (1961), Noyes (2003), Noyes & Valentine (1989), Poinar & Huber (2011), Schauff (1984), Subba Rao & Hayat (1983), Triapitsyn (1987), Triapitsyn & Huber (2000), Yoshimoto (1990). In Romania, significant contributions to the study of the Mymaridae have been brought by: Botoc (1965), Andriescu (1996) and Dimitriu (2001). Current contributions have been brought by Pricop (2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c; 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; 2011a, 2011b, 2012) and Pricop & Andriescu (2011).

Material and Method. We collected the material between the years 2005–2012, with an entomological sweeping net, but we also used yellow pan traps, the Malaise trap, etc. Sorting and preparing the material were performed using a stereomicroscope. Slides, representing almost all the European genera, were prepared for this study and for general illustration. All the studied specimens were mounted in Faure's medium or in Canada balm. The origin of all studied material is Europe. Almost all determinations were performed under the IOR optical microscope. Photographs were taken using Olympus and Canon digital cameras attached to an IOR optical microscope. Available for this preliminary study, beside my personal collection, was some material from other collections, from the Museum of Natural History of Vienna (NHMW), from "Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales de Madrid" (MNCN) and Station Linné. Some information was obtained from publications. We have illustrated the morphology in six figures (Figure 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6). All the figures are original. Terminology follows Gibson (1997).

Results and Discussion. A reviewed key to the European Mymaridae is necessary because some genera are not introduced or included in the old identification keys. The old European keys for the Mymaridae are outdated. Our key is a useful tool for genera identification. For identification, female specimens should be examined with an optical microscope. SEM technology will reveal also other characters. In our identification key we included 20 genera belonging to the Family Mymaridae.

Nineteen valid genera of Mymaridae egg parasitoids, known as fairy flies, are recorded before this study from Europe: *Arescon* Walker; *Macrocamptoptera* Girault; *Camptoptera* Förster; *Litus* Haliday; *Alaptus* Westwood; *Dicopus* Enock; *Ooctonus* Haliday; *Gonatocerus* Nees; *Erythmelus* Enock; *Anagrus* Haliday; *Pseudocleruchus* Donev & Huber; *Stethynium* Enock; *Cleruchus* Enock; *Anaphes* Haliday; *Mymar* Curtis; *Caraphractus* Walker; *Eustochus* Haliday; *Stephanodes* Enock and *Polynema* Haliday. Identified and reported for the first time in Europe is *Ptilomymar* Annecke & Doutt. In the Palaearctic Region, besides the genera from above, were recorded in the past also: *Acmopolynema* Ogloblin; *Anagroidea* Girault; *Dicopomorpha* Ogloblin; *Eubroncus* Yoshimoto, Kozlov & Trjapitzin; *Himopolynema* Taguchi; *Palaeoneura* Waterhouse (= *Chaetomymar*); *Pseudanaphes* Noyes & Valentine; *Omyomymar* Schauff; *Australomymar* Girault. Part of recorded fossil genera is not included in this key.

Korge (2008) illustrated in his paper an unidentified mymarid specimen, collected from Germany, near Berlin. That illustrated specimen certainly belongs to the Mymaridae. We had the good opportunity to examine three photos of a single specimen illustrated by Korge (2008), and we have been able to identify it as *Ptilomymar*. We did not have the opportunity to examine the prepared material. *Ptilomymar* Annecke & Doutt is identified and recorded now for the first time from Europe.

Pseudocleruchus Donev & Huber is introduced for the first time in an identification key. *Pseudocleruchus* is very close and probably related with *Platystethynium* Ogloblin. We also have illustrated in Figures 4b and 5l an unidentified fairy fly genus related with *Stethynium*. This unidentified specimen was collected by us from the European mainland. In this key we have added numerous useful characters. The rarest fairy fly genera, recorded in very few European countries, seem to be: *Macrocamptoptera, Dicopus, Ptilomymar, Pseudocleruchus* and *Eustochus*. Most common genera recorded from many European countries are: *Gonatocerus, Anagrus, Anaphes, Polynema* and *Stephanodes*.

Preliminary key to European genera of the Mymaridae (females):

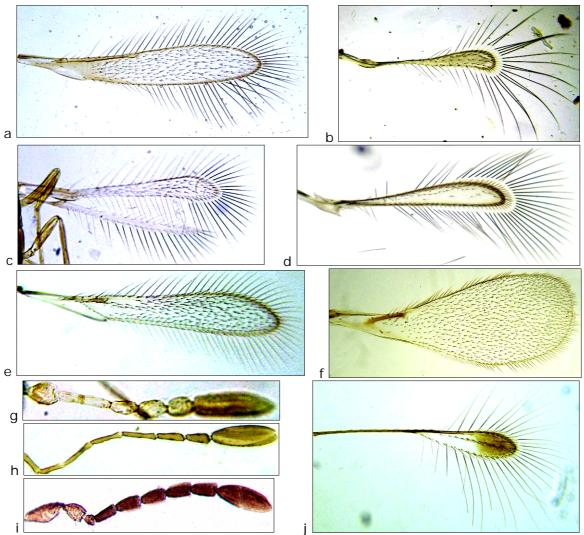


Figure 1. Fairy fly forewings and antennae: a – Arescon dimidiata; b – Dicopus minutissimus; c – Anagrus sp. near incarnatus; d – Alaptus sp.; e – Anaphes leptoceras; f – Gonatocerus sp. 1 near acuminatus; g – antenna without scape of Alaptus minimus; h – antenna of Dicopus sp. near citri, without scape and pedicel; i – Anaphes sp. near diana; j - Mymar pulchellum (original).

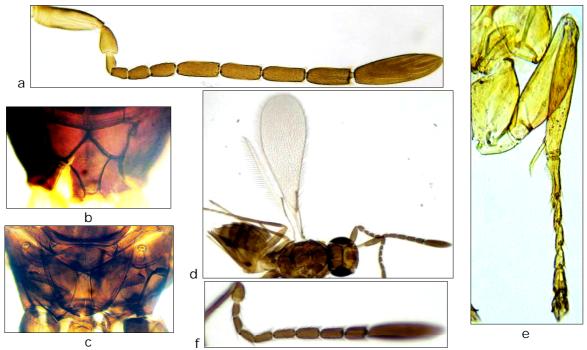


Figure 2. Morphological features of *Gonatocerus* and *Ooctonus*: a – antenna of *Gonatocerus sp.* 2 near *acuminatus*; b – propodeum of *Ooctonus vulgatus*;
c – propodeum of *G. sulphuripes*; d, f – habitus and antenna of *Gonatocerus sp.* 3 near *acuminatus*; e – fore leg of *Gonatocerus longicornis* (original).

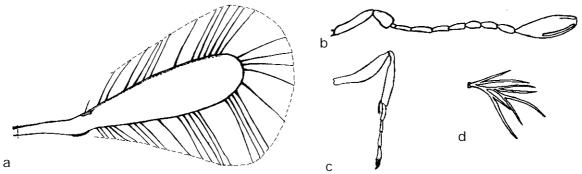


Figure 3. *Ptilomymar sp.*: a – forewing; b – antenna; c – fore leg; d – branched propodeal setae (original).

10. Metasoma sessile (the petiole is absent) to subsessile, at most with inconspicuous petiole, usually shorter than wide, no longer than broad, almost ring-like; body weakly sclerotized; funicle 5 to 6-segmented; clava 1, 2 or 3-segmented; base of first gastral segment apparently not projecting into petiole or foramen; scutellum can be divided transversely; first tarsal segment about as long as second tarsal segment......**11** - Metasoma with distinct petiole (Figures 6a, 6d, 6e), much longer than wide (almost tube-like); body well sclerotized (strongly chitinized); funicle 6-segmented (Figure 6h); clava only 1 or 2 segmented (not 3-segmented); base of first gastral segment usually projecting into petiole; scutellum entire; first tarsal segment (the basitarsus) about 2 times as long as second tarsal segment.....**16**

11. Metasoma with a prominent hypopygium, extending to apex of gaster and bearing denticles; funicle 5 to 6-segmented; clava 1-segmented (Figure 4f); mandibles apparently absent (mandibles greatly reduced), without teeth and not meeting medially; fore tibia with several rows of small spines; dorsellum can project out over the propodeum (the dorsellum is usually pointed)......*Erythmelus* Enock (= *Parallelaptera* Enock)

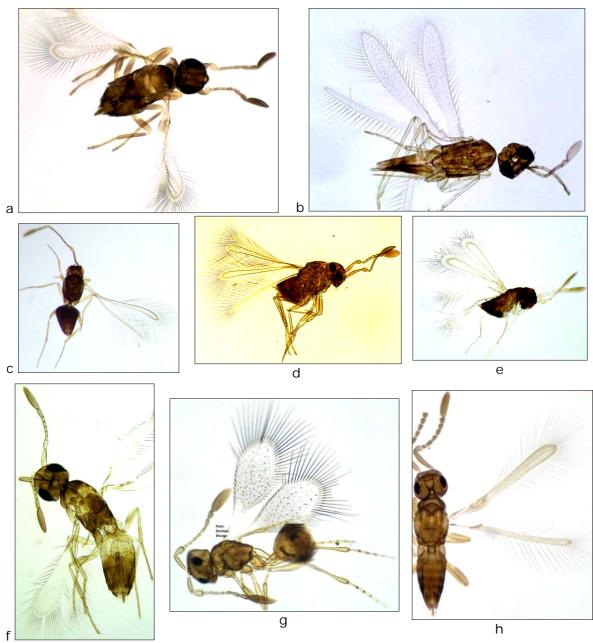


Figure 4. Some Mymaridae and Mymarommatidae – female habitus: a – Anagrus sp.;
b – unidentified genus; c – Camptoptera sp.; d – Litus cynipseus; e – Alaptus minimus;
f – Erythmelus flavovarius; g – Mymaromella sp.; h – Cleruchus pluteus (original).

14. Head and mesosoma evidently and strongly flattened dorsoventrally (Figure 5a); head much longer and wider than high, frons and face angled acutely backwards under toruli (Figure 5a); mandibles more or less reduced and not meeting or overlapping, teeth not evident; clava divided almost transversally into 3 segments (clava with transverse or only slightly oblique sutures - Figures 5b, 5e); all the funicular segments are short and wide (Figure 5e); scape without transverse lines or folds (without transverse striation-like lines), but with more than 3 longitudinal lines of setae (Figures 5a, 5e); the cubital line of hairs is not evident. is almost absent: leas relatively short and robust...... Pseudocleruchus Donev & Huber - Head and mesosoma not flattened dorsoventrally; head higher than long, frons and face are vertical and straight (Figure 5i); mandibles normal developed and overlapping (mandibles with 4 teeth); clava evidently divided obliquely into 3 segments (Figures 5c, 5h); almost all the funicular segments are much longer than wide (Figure 5h); scape with transversal to obligue lines or folds (transversal striation-like lines) and at most with 2 longitudinal lines of setae (Figure 5g); the cubital line of hairs more or less evident

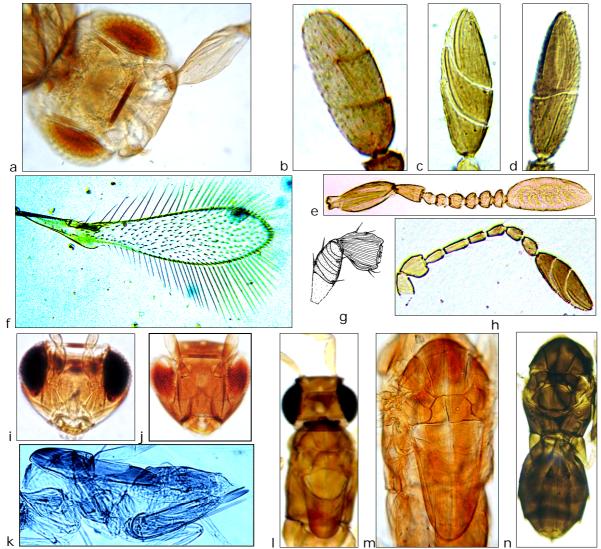


Figure 5. Morphological features of some Mymaridae: a, b, e – head, clava and antenna of *Pseudocleruchus spp.*; c, f, g, h, i, k – clava, forewing, antenna, head and body of *Stethynium triclavatum*; d, j, n – clava, head and body of *Anaphes spp.*;
I – head and mesosoma of an unidentified genus; m – mesosoma of *Anagrus sp.*, phragma projecting deep into gaster (original).

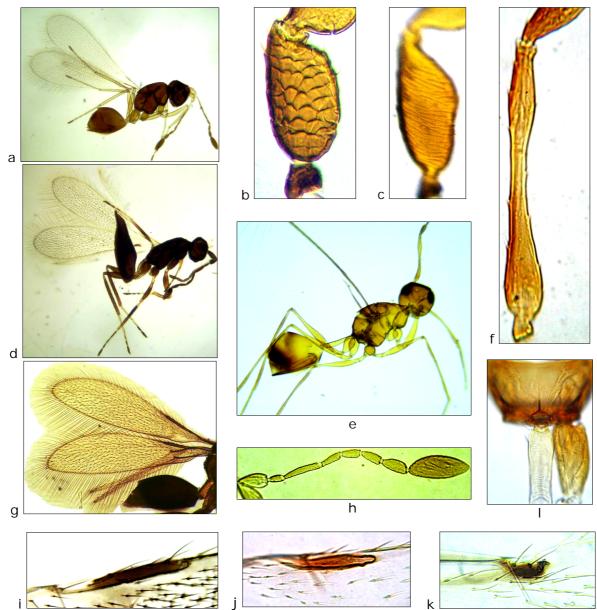


Figure 6. *Stephanodes*, *Polynema* and *Mymar*: a, b, j – habitus, scape and forewing vein of *Stephanodes similis*; c, k – scape and forewing vein of *Polynema valkenburgense*;

d, h, I – habitus, antenna and propodeum with petiole of *Polynema spp.*; e, f – habitus and scape of *Mymar pulchellum*; g – wings of *Caraphractus cinctus*; i – forewing vein of *Eustochus sp.* (original).

Note: The fossil specimen: fairy wasp (Hymenoptera, Mymaridae; NHMW, N6970), illustrated by Schmidt et al (2010) in Figure 3G (pp. 7332), belongs to *Alaptus* group of genera.

Below we also add some faunistic data on the Romanian Mymaridae. The following genera are recorded for the first time for and from Dobrogea: *Anagrus, Gonatocerus, Litus, Ooctonus, Stepahnodes* and *Stethynium*.

Newly recorded species for Moldova and/or Dobrogea provinces - Eastern part of Romania, with notes

1. *Alaptus minimus* Westwood, **1839** - Material examined: $1^\circ_+ + 2^\circ_-$, 15.07.2010, Vicovu de Jos, Suceava county (Leg. Chiriliuc A.), rearings from *Tanacetum sp.*, probably from Psocoptera eggs. Notes: species characterized by small specimens; the row of discal hairs on forewings comprises on average 11 hairs; antennal segments relatively short (Figure 1g); ovipositor short, slightly protrude (Figure 4e). *Alaptus minimus* is newly recorded for Moldova.

2. *Anagrus sp.* – Material examined: 1, 15.07.2011, Sulina - Danube Delta, Tulcea county (Leg. Pricop E.), collected with a sweep net from wetland vegetation. Notes: small specimen, all funicle articles short and broad; forewings with a bare area (Figure 4a), ovipositor short (Figure 4a). Our specimen is close to *Anagrus takeyanus* Gordh. Genus newly recorded for Dobrogea.

3. *Gonatocerus sulphuripes* (Förster, 1847) - Material examined: 1^Q, 15.07.2011, Sulina – Danube Delta, Tulcea county (Leg. Pricop E.), collected with a sweep net from wetland vegetation. Notes: F7–F8 each with 2 sensory ridges (mps), disc of forewings densely setose between marginal vein and cubital line of hairs, propodeum with 2 longitudinal carinae (Figure 2c). *Gonatocerus sulphuripes* is newly recorded for Dobrogea.

4. Gonatocerus sp. 1 near acuminatus – Material examined: 1Å, 14.08.2001, Valea lui David reserve – Miroslava, Iaşi county (Leg. Dimitriu D. I.). Notes: large specimen belonging to *"litoralis"* species group, body brownish; scape short and with transverse striations or folds; the cubital line of hairs is not present (Figure 1f)., forewing base with a more or less bare area (Figure 1f).

5. Gonatocerus sp. 2 near acuminatus – Material examined: 1, 11.08.2010, Piatra Neamţ, Neamţ county (Leg. Pricop. E.), collected with yellow pan traps. Notes: large specimen belonging to *"litoralis"* species group, but with a smaller ovipositor in comparison with *G. acuminatus*. In our specimen: F5 to F8 each with sensory ridges (mps), F8 with 4 sensory ridges (Figure 2a); forewings broad, a more or less distinct bare area is present between marginal vein and cubital line of hairs.

6. Gonatocerus sp. 3 near acuminatus – Material examined: 2, 27.06.2012, Miroslava, Iaşi county (Leg. Pricop. E.), collected with a sweep net. Notes: Iarge specimens, belonging to "*litoralis*" species group, close to *G. acuminatus*, but is different from *G. acuminatus* because of the much shorter ovipositor (Figure 2d), in female antenna (Figures 2d, f) radicale and scape are long, scape with longitudinal striations, F6 to F8 each with sensory ridges (mps), F8 with 3-4 sensory ridges (mps), forewings broad (Figure 2d), forewing disc densely setose between marginal vein and cubital line of hair.

7. *Litus cynipseus* (Haliday, 1833) - Material examined: 4^Q, 5.08.2010, Agigea sand dunes reserve, Constanta county (Leg. Ciobanu D.), collected with yellow pan traps. Notes: Small specimens, mesosoma strongly reticulated, antennae with short and broad segments, clava broad and massive. *Litus cynipseus* (Figure 4d) is newly recorded for Dobrogea.

8. *Ooctonus vulgatus* (Haliday, 1833) - Material examined: 1, 2.09.1983, Tătlăgeac lake, Constanța county (Leg. Andriescu I.), ecotone, wetland vegetation. Notes: F7 and F8 each with 2 sensory ridgers (mps), F1 to F3 each much longer than wide. Areola on propodeum is present (Figure 2b). *Ooctonus vulgatus* is newly recorded for Dobrogea.

9. Stepahnodes similis (Förster, 1847) - Material examined: 1, 27.06.1985, Uzlina – Danube Delta, Tulcea county (Leg. Andriescu I.), wetland area; 1, 2.09.1983, Tătlăgeac, Constanța county, (Leg. Andriescu I.), ecotone - wetland zone. Notes: scape

scaly (Figures 6a, b), marginal vein of forewings is slender (Figure 6j). *Stepahnodes similis* is a common species in Eastern part of Romania and is newly recorded for Dobrogea.

10. Stethynium triclavatum Enock, **1909** - Material examined: 1, 5.07.1981, Murighiol – Danube Delta, Tulcea county (Leg. Andriescu I.), collected with a sweep net; 2, 4.09.1985, Uzlina – Danube Delta, Tulcea county (Leg. Andriescu I.), from *Salix sp.* (wetland area); 10, 4, 3, 16.07.2011, near Tulcea city – wetlands of port area, Danube bank, Tulcea county (Leg. Pricop E.), collected with a sweep net from *Salix alba* - associated vegetation. Notes: body not flat (Figure 5k), antennal clava with three segments (Figures 5c, h), forewings broad (Figure 5f). *Stethynium triclavatum* appears to be common in the Danube Delta area, on wetlands and is newly recorded for Dobrogea.

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