

A NEW GIANT WATER BUG FROM MEXICO

(Hemiptera: Belostomatidae)

By ARNOLD S. MENKE<sup>1</sup>

In the course of identifying the specimens of *Lethocerus* in the Entomological Collection of the Los Angeles County Museum (LACM) as a part of a study of the Western Hemisphere members of the genus, a new species was found which is closely related to *L. colossicus* (Stal) and *L. camposi* (Montandon). Consequent to this discovery, additional material was obtained through the courtesy of the California Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the David R. Lauck Collection (DRL), University of Illinois. The author (AM) recently took more material while on a collecting trip into Mexico. The abbreviations, indicated in parentheses above, designate the place of deposition of type specimens.

I would like to acknowledge the loan of specimens of *L. camposi* by Dr. John S. Garth of the Hancock Foundation, University of Southern California.

*Lethocerus truxali* new species

(Figs. 1, 5)

SIZE: Male, length 68-73 mm.; holotype, length 73 mm., width 29 mm.

DESCRIPTION OF MALE: Interocular space with an irregular median carina near apex; inner margins of eyes subparallel for most of their length but diverging rather suddenly near vertex; ratio of narrowest interocular distance to widest, 3 : 4; eye width (measured through eye at inner posterior angle) less than greatest interocular distance; dorsal outline of eye (viewing head from front) curved; widest postocular space one-half width of clypeus; lateral margin of pronotum evenly arcuate, foliaceous and light brown; anterior lobe of pronotum dark brown with two broad, diverging, light brown stripes (best seen in alcohol); hemelytron evenly

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colored, not irrorate; veins of corium very prominent; metasternum produced into a spine posteriorly; abdominal venter evenly colored dark brown, although with a tendency to be irrorate in some specimens; connexival plate I covered mesally with appressed pubescence; profemur dorsally with a median, longitudinal, dark brown stripe, the length to width ratio, 18.7 : 3.7; outer margin of metatibia nearly straight; width of metatarsal segment I less than least interocular distance, the ratio, 2.7 : 3.1; aedeagus as in figures 1 and 5.

FEMALE: Similar to male.

TYPES: Holotype male: Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico, Dec. 15, 1955, Alex Elias (LACM). Allotype female: Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico, Sept. 19, 1955, B. C. Templeton (LACM). Paratypes as follows: 72 mi. so. Los Mochis, Sinaloa, Mexico, July 17, 1956, A. Lewis (LACM) ♂; Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico, June 27, 1918, J. A. Kusche (CAS) ♂; Tuxpan, Nayarit, Mexico, Aug. 12, 1957, D. Lauck and W. Wheatcroft (DRL) 6 ♂♂, ♀; Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico, Aug. 26-27, 1959, A. Menke and L. Stange (AM) 9 ♂♂, 6 ♀♀. Paratypes from the David R. Lauck and the A. Menke collections will be deposited in the collections of the University of Kansas, the U. S. National Museum and the Stockholm Natural History Museum.

DISTRIBUTION: In Mexico this species is probably restricted to the west coastal drainage system, being the counterpart in the west of *Lethocerus colossicus* (Stal, 1855)<sup>2</sup> which is found along the east coast of Mexico and on into Central America and the West Indies. *Lethocerus truxali* probably occurs in Central America also, as indicated by two female specimens taken by David Lauck at Dario, Matagalpa, Nicaragua. The specimens agree in every way with *L. truxali* but males will have to be seen for positive identification.

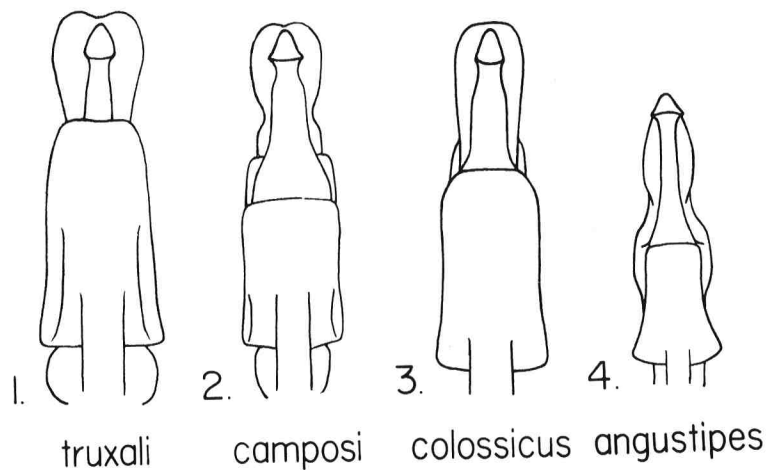
COMPARATIVE NOTES: For one using Cummings' (1933) key to *Lethocerus*, *L. truxali* will key out to *L. camposi* (Montandon, 1900) which is known only from Ecuador. These two species are very similar externally but *truxali* can be distinguished by the two diverging light brown stripes on the pronotum. The pronotum of *camposi* is more uniform in color. The aedeagus differs in the two species (Figs. 1, 2, 5, 7). *L. truxali* is also readily separated from *L. colossicus*.<sup>3</sup> The latter has peculiar eyes that are flat along the dorsal margin and nearly as wide as long. In addition, the postocular space is wider than one-half the width of the clypeus in *L. colossicus*. In *L. truxali* the eyes are rounded along the dorsal margin and are obviously longer than wide. The aedeagus of *colossicus* is distinct

<sup>2</sup>The name was spelled *colossicus* in the original description, but this was obviously a printer's lapsus since the species name was derived from the Greek word *kolossos* and should have been spelled with one "l" as corrected by Stal in later references.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Eric Kjellander of the Stockholm Natural History Museum kindly loaned me the type of *L. colossicus*. It agrees with Stal's description. The specimen is a female and bears the following data on labels: Honduras (hand written), Hjalmarson (hand written), typus (machine printed on red card), and the numbers 59-86. The specimen measures 78.5 mm. long and 30.5 mm. wide.

(Figs. 3, 8). *L. angustipes* (Mayr, 1871), is the only other Mexican species which might be confused with *L. truxali*, but it is smaller and has a distinct aedeagus (Figs. 4, 6).

This species is named in honor of Dr. Fred S. Truxal who has made many contributions to the taxonomy of the aquatic Hemiptera.



5. truxali



6. angustipes



7. camposi



8. colossicus

Figs. 1-8. Aedeagus of related species of *Lethocerus*. Figs. 1-4, dorsal view; figs. 5-8, lateral view.

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