



The bees of the genus *Colletes* Latreille (Hymenoptera: Colletidae) of the Caucasus region

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Abstract

Information about bees of the genus *Colletes* in the Caucasus region is summarized. Two new species are described from Azerbaijan: *Colletes jovell* Kuhlmann & Proshchalykin, **sp. nov.** and *C. longimala* Kuhlmann & Proshchalykin, **sp. nov.** Nine species are newly recorded from Caucasus: *C. asiaticus* Kuhlmann 1999, *C. brevigena* Noskiewicz 1936, *C. cariniger* Pérez 1903, *C. glaber* Warncke 1978, *C. idoneus* Cockerell 1922, *C. inexpectatus* Noskiewicz 1936, *C. meyeri* Noskiewicz 1936, *C. schwarzi* Kuhlmann 2002, and *C. wahrmani* Noskiewicz 1959. A total of 50 species are currently known from this area.

Key words: Apiformes, melittofauna, new species, Palearctic Region, taxonomy

Introduction

The present paper is the last part of a series of works dealing with the bees of the genus *Colletes* Latreille of the territory of the former Soviet Union (Kuhlmann & Proshchalykin 2011, 2013, 2014a, b, 2015a, b; Proshchalykin & Kuhlmann 2012, 2013, 2015a, b). Currently 110 species are known from this territory, but the *Colletes* fauna of the Caucasus region is particularly understudied.

The Caucasus region is a mountain area lying between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, considered part of the natural boundary between Europe and Asia. Geographically it is usually considered part of Western Asia, adjacent to northeastern Turkey and northwestern Iran. The northern edge of the Caucasus is known as the Ciscaucasus and the southern portion as the Transcaucasus. The Ciscaucasus contains the large majority of the Greater Caucasus Mountain range, also known as the Major Caucasus mountains. It includes the southern part of European Russia (Krasnodar Territory, Stavropol Territory, Adygea Republic, Karachaevo-Cherkesk Republic, Ingushetia Republic, Kabardino-Balkarskaya Republic, Severnaya Osetia Republic, Chechenskaya Republic, Dagestan Republic) and northern parts of Georgia and Azerbaijan. The Transcaucasus is bordered in the north by Russia, in the west by the Black Sea and Turkey, in the east by the Caspian Sea, and in the south by Iran. It includes the Caucasus Mountains and surrounding lowlands. All Armenia, Azerbaijan (excluding the northern parts) and Georgia (excluding the northern parts) are part of the South Caucasus (Fig. 1).

Colletes are one of the least-studied genera occurring in the Caucasus region. So far only 17 species have been recorded from Ciscaucasus (Kuhlmann & Proshchalykin 2014b) and 39 species from Transcaucasus (Morawitz 1877; Noskiewicz 1936; Warncke 1978; Skhirtladze 1979, 1981; Aliev 1985a, b; Aliev & Kirschev 2010; Kirkitadze & Japoshvili 2015). *Colletes* records published by Skhirtladze (2003) are problematic and, because they were not available for study, they are not considered here. Apart from confused nomenclature, some of the species reported in that paper are taxonomically difficult and the Caucasus region is far outside of their known range. There are also concerns about some determinations published by Aliev (1985a, b) and Aliev & Kirschev (2010). Male specimens of three species identified by Aliev as *C. marginatus*, *C. pallescens* (= *chengtehensis*), and *C.*