



In the footsteps of history: the bees of the genus *Hylaeus* Fabricius (Hymenoptera, Apoidea: Colletidae) collected by V.I. Roborovsky and P.K. Kozlov in Northwest China (1895–1926)

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Abstract

An annotated list of 19 species of *Hylaeus* collected by the famous Russian explorers and travellers V.I. Roborovsky and P.K. Kozlov in Northwest China (1895–1926) is given. *Hylaeus* (*Hylaeus*) *roborovskyi* Proshchalykin & Dathe, **sp. nov.** is described as new from Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The following eight known species are newly recorded from China: *Hylaeus angustatus* (Schenck, 1861), *H. arenarius* Morawitz, 1876, *H. breviceps* Morawitz, 1876, *H. communis* Nylander, 1852, *H. fedtschenkoi* (Cockerell, 1906), *H. pallidicornis* Morawitz, 1876, *H. pesenkoi* Proshchalykin & Dathe, 2016, and *H. vulgaris* Morawitz, 1876, increasing the number of species reported from the region to 48. New synonymy is established for *Hylaeus tsingtauensis* (Strand, 1915) = *H. montivagus* Dathe, 1986, **syn. nov.**

Key words: fauna, Palaearctic region, taxonomy, new records, new species

Introduction

By the end of the 19th century, explorers filled in the last blank areas on the maps of Asia. Although their objective was to investigate a wide range of political, mercantile and geographic aspects of the target areas, these expeditions were designed with remarkable care. They often included ethnic and natural history studies, frequently with the participation of professionals. Of particular note is the activity of the Imperial Society of Naturalists, Anthropologists, and Ethnographers of Moscow, which through its inspirations and publications has laid the foundations for a scientific development of the hitherto unknown territories. In particular, the expeditions of A.P. Fedchenko, G.N. Potanin, N.M. Przewalsky, and V.I. Roborovsky also returned with substantial entomological collections (Pesenko & Astafurova 2003; Baker 2004; Dathe & Proshchalykin 2017).

One of the reasons for the outstanding importance of the entomological collection of the Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg [ZISP], is that it houses extensive material from the Russian expeditions of the explorers N.M. Przewalsky (Fig. 1a), V.I. Roborovsky (Fig. 1b) and M.V. Pevtsov from 1883 to 1926, in which P.K. Kozlov (Fig. 1c) participated as a collector of insects. During work in the collection of ZISP, extensive material (more than 1000 specimens) of *Hylaeus* bees collected by several participants of the expedition of V.I. Roborovsky in 1895, as well as specimens collected by Kozlov on subsequent expeditions to Northwest China in 1901–1926, were discovered (Table 1). The presence of such a large number of outlasting specimens in one genus is very surprising, because, for example, in the ZISP collection there are only 79 specimens of *Halictus* Latreille collected during these expeditions (Pesenko 1984). Material from these expeditions had already been partly described, especially by F.F. Morawitz (1827–1896), but the possibilities for research are far from exhausted.

The present work refers to areas of northwestern China (Fig. 2), which adjoin the Central Asian territories, mainly Kazakhstan, to the east and provide a bridge to Mongolia. V.I. Roborovsky was a participant in three