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A NEW GENUS OF THE FAMILY METARBELIDAE (LEPIDOPTERA: COSSOIDEA) FROM CENTRAL AND WESTERN AFRICA

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Summary. New genus *Sineviella* gen. n. (Lepidoptera: Cossioidea, Metarbelidae) and two new species, *Sineviella tropeki* sp. n. (type species) and *S. maicheri* sp. n. are described from Africa. The new genus is most similar to the oriental genus *Encaumaptera* Hampson, 1893 but differs in the semi-transparent wings, in the size of the basal and apical portions of the uncus, and the special armor of the medial tegumental lobes.

Key words: biodiversity, Carpenter-Moths, taxonomy, Afrotropics, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea.

П. Д. Павлова, Г. С. Мюллер, А. М. Прозоров, Р. В. Яковлев. Новый род семейства Metarbelidae (Lepidoptera, Cossioidea) из Центральной и Западной Африки // Дальневосточный энтомолог. 2026. N 542. С. 1-10.

Резюме. Из Африки описан новый род *Sineviella* **gen. n.** (Lepidoptera: Cossioidea, Metarbelidae) и два новых вида, *Sineviella tropeki* **sp. n.** (типовой вид) и *S. maicheri* **sp. n.** Новый род близок к ориентальному роду *Encaumaptera* Hampson, 1893, но отличается от него полупрозрачными крыльями, размером базальной и апикальной частей ункуса, а также вооружением медиальных долей тегумена.

INTRODUCTION

The palaeotropical family Metarbelidae (Lepidoptera, Cossioidea) comprises approximately 350 described species. Of these, about 300 species occur in Africa and Madagascar, while around 50 species are documented from South and South-East Asia (Gaede, 1929, 1933; Nieukerken *et al.*, 2011; Lehmann, 2019a; Yakovlev & Zolotuhin, 2020; de Prins & de Prins, 2025). In recent decades, taxonomic interest in this family has increased, resulting in the descriptions of numerous new taxa (Mey, 2005, 2018; Lehmann, 2008, 2009, 2010 a, b, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2019 a, b; Lehmann & Rajaei, 2013; Lehmann *et al.*, 2018, 2023; Yakovlev & Zolotuhin, 2020, 2021 a, b, c, d, 2022; Yakovlev *et al.*, 2022, 2023, 2025; Lehmann & Dalsgaard, 2023). Examining the materials on this interesting group, we discovered a new genus to science, which includes two species; their descriptions are provided below.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To prepare this article, we used materials from two collections: ANHRT – African Natural History Research Trust (Leominster, UK); CGM – research collection of Günter Müller (Freising, Germany).

Male genitalia were mounted in Euparal on slides, following Lafontaine & Mikkola (1987), and examined with an Olympus SZX16 microscope. Images of imago were taken by the digital camera of Apple iPhone 7, illuminated in Lightbox. The images were processed using CorelDraw software.

TAXONOMY

Order Lepidoptera Linnaeus, 1758

Suborder Glossata Latreille, 1802

Superfamily Cossioidea Leach, [1815]

Family Metarbelidae Strand, 1909

Genus *Sineviella* Pavlova, Müller, Prozorov et Yakovlev, gen. n.

<https://zoobank.org/NomenclaturalActs/8D30F81F-E817-495F-BA4F-1FC003F75865>

Type species: *Sineviella tropeki* **sp. n.**, here designated.

DESCRIPTION. Male. Moths of medium size. Antenna 2–2.5 times shorter than fore wing, bipectinate, rami 2.5–3 times longer than flagellum in diameter. Legs very densely covered with long scales, abdomen apically covered with a cushion of relatively long, very dense scales. Wings semi-transparent.

Male genitalia. Uncus basally very extended, apically quite narrow, long, tapered; tegumen trapezoidal, with robust medial tegumental lobes armored with numerous long spines and hooks; valve narrow, lanceolate, poorly sclerotized; juxta tiny, saddle-like; saccus thin, cylindrical; phallus almost equal to valve in length, vesica aperture in dorso-apical position, vesica without cornuti.

Female unknown.

DIAGNOSIS. The new genus, with all its originality, reveals similarities only with the oriental genus *Encaumaptera* Hampson, 1893 (type species: *Brachylia stigmata* Hampson, 1891, by original designation) (Yakovlev & Zolotuhin, 2020). *Sineviella* and *Encaumaptera* are united by the legs very densely covered with long scales; the abdomen apically with a cushion of relatively long, very dense scales; the helmet-like uncus; the hypertrophied medial tegumental lobes; the narrow lanceolate valves. However, such significant characteristics as the semi-transparent wings, sharp difference in the size of the basal and apical portions of the uncus, and the special armor of the medial tegumental lobes allow for the allocation of a separate genus.

COMPOSITION. Two species: *S. tropeki* **sp. n.** and *S. maicheri* **sp. n.**

DISTRIBUTION. Africa: Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea.

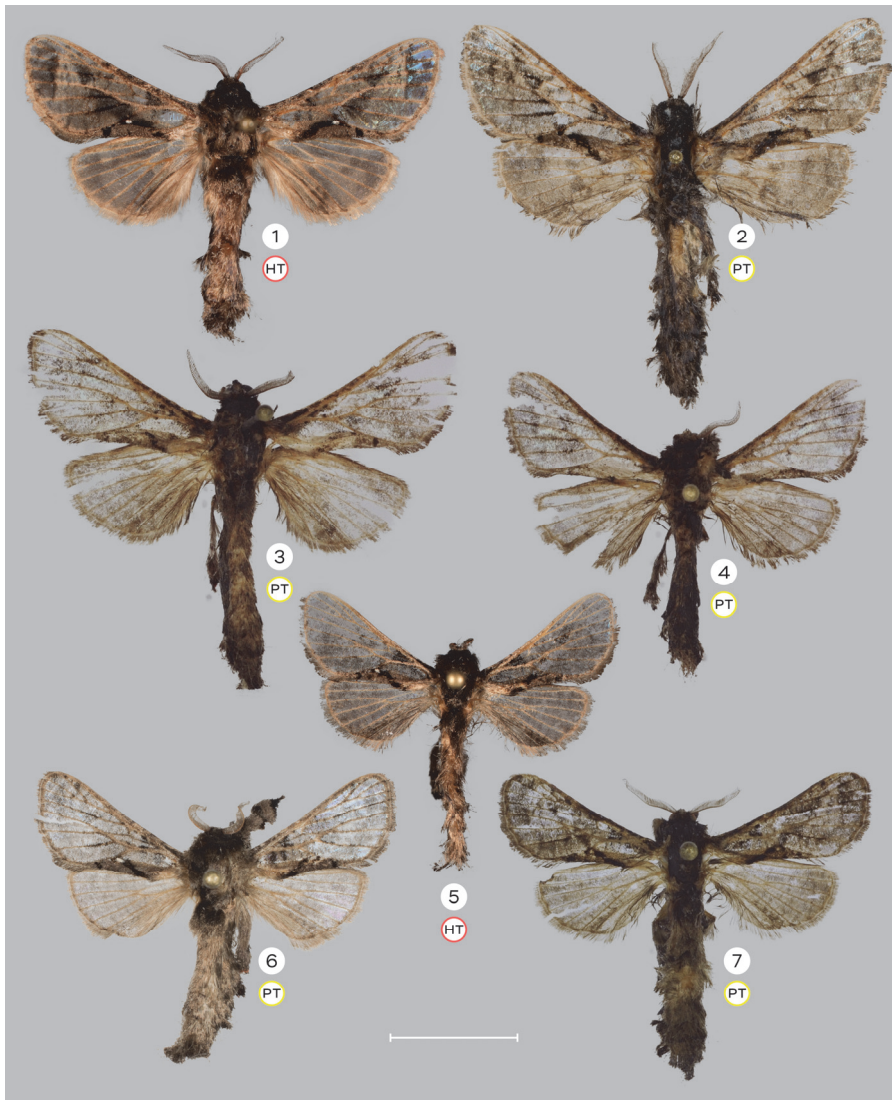
ETYMOLOGY. The new genus is named after our friend Dr. Sergey Sinev (St. Petersburg), a well-known Russian entomologist, Head of the Laboratory of Insect Taxonomy of Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Science.

***Sineviella tropeki* Pavlova, Müller, Prozorov et Yakovlev, sp. n.**

<https://zoobank.org/NomenclaturalActs/AA092D9B-FE54-4ED5-80B3-88E64E3A2862>

Figs 1–4, 8–11, 15.

TYPE MATERIAL. Holotype: ♂, **Cameroon:** M'Balmayo, h=700 m, IX 2004, leg. Jean Mbida (CGM, slide Prozorov 2025/1642). Paratypes (seven males): **Democratic Republic of the Congo:** Mai-Ndombe Prov., Ekongo camp, 350 m, 2.75613°S, 20.31538°E, November 2017 & May 2018, 3♂, leg. A. Prozorov & T. Prozorova (CGM, slide Prozorov 2025/1579); **Republic of Congo:** Sangha Prov., Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, Bomassa Camp, 02°12'36.9" N, 16°11'30.2" E, h=341 m, secondary forest, 16–23.IX 2022, 1♂, leg. V. Dérozier, B. Fouka, A. Kirk-Spriggs & H. Takano. (ANHRT: 2022.14, unique number: ANHRTUK 00286869, slide Yakovlev/Pavlova 2025/065); **Gabon:** province de l'Estuaire, Nyonié, 0°2'22" S, 9°20'25" E, h=10 m, lowland forest, MV – light trap, 23–28.VIII 2019, 1♂, leg. J-L. Albert, M. Aristophanous, J. Bie Mba, V. Derozier & A. Moretto. ANHRT: 2019.17 (ANHRT; Individual number ANHRT: 00172217. Slide: ANHRT Pavlova & Yakovlev 2025/067); **Côte d'Ivoire:** National Part Taï, 5°45' N, 7°7' W, 12.XI 1983, 1♂, leg. Dr. Politzar (CGM, slide Prozorov 2022/0179); **Guinea:** Konakri, Macenta Prefecture, Mt. Nimba, h=550 m, ziama forest, XI 2016, 1♂, leg. G. Petranji, V.D. Kravchenko & G. Müller (CGM, slide Prozorov 2025/1669).



Figs 1–7. Adult males of *Sineviella* spp. 1–3 – *S. tropeki*: 1 – holotype, Cameroon (CGM); 2 – paratype, Côte d'Ivoire (CGM); 3 – paratype, Gabon (ANHRT); 4 – paratype, Republic of Congo (ANHRT); 5–7 – *S. maicheri*: 5 – holotype, Cameroon (CGM); 6 – paratype, Cameroon (CGM); 7 – *S. maicheri*, paratype, Guinea (ANHRT).

DESCRIPTION. Male. Length of fore wing 13–17 mm (holotype – 15 mm). Antenna 2 times shorter than fore wing, flagellum light brown, bipectinate, rami light brown, 3 times longer than flagellum in diameter. Thorax and abdomen covered with brown scales, abdomen apically with cushion-like bundle of relatively

long, very dense scales. Legs very densely covered with long scales. Fore wing relatively elongated. Wing pattern described according to the best preserved specimen (Holotype). Fore wing semi-transparent, with dense sputtering of light-brown, grey, and black scales; black oblique stroke at base of medial and cubital veins, small white spot at base of Cu₂, small bright black spot along anal margin of wing (in medium third), veins brown, fringe brown, unicolorous. Hind wing semi-transparent (except for brown anal margin), with dense sputtering of light-brown, grey, and black scales, fringe brown, unicolorous.

Male genitalia. Uncus robust, distally shaped as relatively extended cone of medium length, basal half trapezoidal with acute strongly sclerotized angles; tegumen trapezoidal, medial tegumental lobes robust, strongly sclerotized, their apical tips with robust tapered and hook-like processes, rest of surface densely covered with long needle-like spines; valve narrow, lanceolate, poorly sclerotized, with small semicircular harpe on border between sclerotized and membranous portions (valvula); juxta tiny, saddle-like; saccus thin, cylindrical; phallus almost equal to valve in length, coecum slightly curved, vesica aperture in dorso-apical position, vesica without cornuti.

Female unknown.

REMARK. As most of the collection specimens of *Sineviella* **gen. n.** are in a very bad condition (heavily damaged wings, poorly visible pattern), it is necessary to use only morphological characters.

DIAGNOSIS. This species is most similar to *S. maicheri* **sp. n.** but differs from it by a series of features: the thicker and shorter uncus; the special armor of the medial tegumental lobes, apically on the tip with robust tapered and hook-like processes, the rest of the surface covered with long needle-like spines; the small semicircular harpe on the valve.

DISTRIBUTION. Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire.

ETYMOLOGY. The new species is named after Prof. Dr. Robert Tropek (Prague) well-known entomologist and ecologist, who made significant contributions to the study of Cameroon's biodiversity.

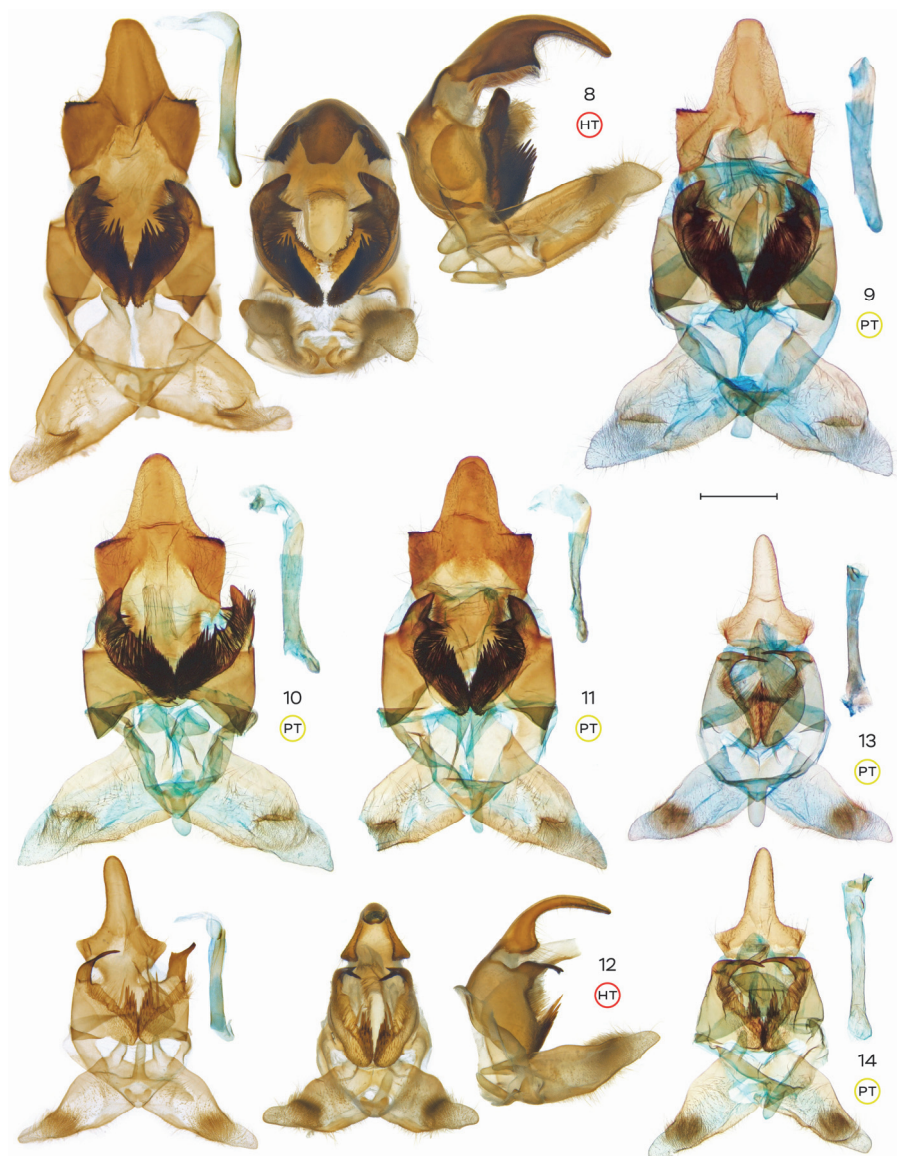
***Sineviella maicheri* Pavlova, Müller, Prozorov et Yakovlev, sp. n.**

<https://zoobank.org/NomenclaturalActs/243486FA-6102-4CCC-98A4-A06925DCF2BA>

Figs 5–7, 12–15

TYPE MATERIAL. Holotype: ♂, SW **Cameroon**: Mt. Cameroon, 5 km SW Ekona, 02°14' N, 9°20' E, h=900 m, 7–19. IV 2008, leg. Felix & Schintlmeister (CGM; slide Prozorov 2025/1640). Paratypes (two males): 1♂, same data as holotype (CGM; slide Prozorov 2022/0232); **Guinea**: Nimba Mts., SMFG concession area (Société des Mines de Fer de Guinée), cité 1, 7°42.2'83" N, 8°23'58.60" W, h=700 m, montane forest, 25.VIII–5.IX 2017, 1♂, leg. Sz. Safian, G. Simonics. ANHRT 2017.36. (Individual number ANHRT: 00221032. Slide: ANHRT Pavlova & Yakovlev 2025/066).

DESCRIPTION. Male. Length of fore wing 12–14 mm (holotype – 12 mm). Antenna 2 times shorter than fore wing, flagellum light brown, bipectinate, rami light



Figs 8–14. Male genitalia of *Sineviella* spp. 8–11 – *S. tropeki*: 8 – holotype, Cameroon (CGM); 9 – paratype, Côte d'Ivoire (CGM); 10 – paratype, Gabon (ANHRT); 11 – paratype, Republic of Congo (ANHRT); 12–14 – *S. maicheri*: 12 – holotype, Cameroon (CGM); 13 – paratype, Cameroon (CGM); 14 – paratype, Guinea (ANHRT).

brown, 3 times longer than flagellum in diameter. Thorax and abdomen covered with brown scales, abdomen apically with cushion-like bundle of relatively long, very dense scales. Legs very densely covered with long scales. Fore wing relatively elongated. Fore wing semi-transparent, with dense sputtering of light-brown, grey, and black scales; small bright-black stroke along anal margin of wing (in basal third), small white spot at its top, veins brown, fringe brown, unicolorous. Hind wing semi-transparent (except for brown anal margin), with dense sputtering of light-brown, grey, and black scales, fringe brown, unicolorous.

Male genitalia. Uncus robust, distally shaped as narrow long cone, basal half rhomboid; tegumen trapezoidal, with robust strongly sclerotized medial tegumental lobes, their apical tips with robust long hook-like process, basally group of needle-like spines of various length, long setae in medium third; valve narrow, lanceolate, poorly sclerotized; juxta tiny, saddle-like; saccus thin, cylindrical; phallus approximately equal to valve in length, almost straight, vesica aperture in dorso-apical position, vesica without cornuti.

Female unknown.

DIAGNOSIS. This species is most similar to *S. tropeki* **sp. n.** but differs from it by follow features: the thinner and longer uncus; the special armor of the medial tegumental lobes, apically on the tip with robust, long hook-like process, basally with a group of needle-like spines of various lengths, long setae in the medium third; no harpe in the valve.

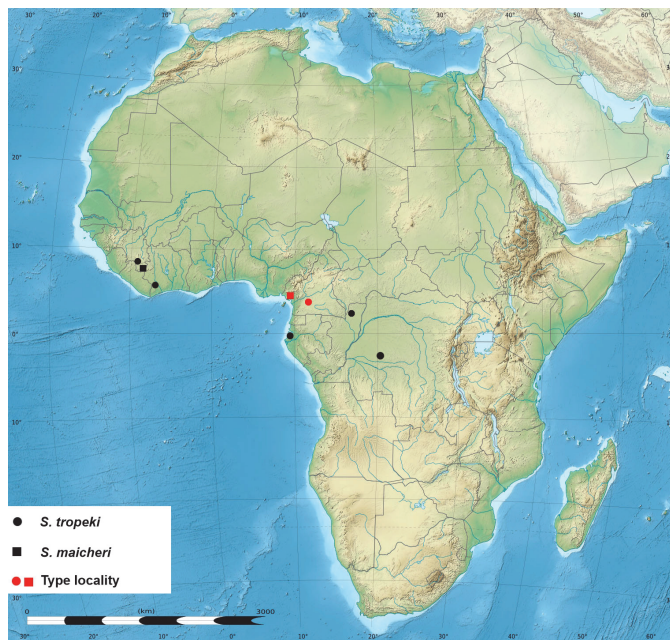


Fig. 15. Map of species distribution of *Sineviella*.

DISTRIBUTION. Africa: Cameroon, Guinea.

ETYMOLOGY. The new species is named after Dr. Vincent Maicher (Libreville), a well-known entomologist and ecologist, who has made significant contributions to the study of Cameroon's biodiversity.

CONCLUSION

The new genus is widely distributed in West and Central Africa and populates several neighboring eco-regions (Burgess *et al.*, 2004): the Northwestern Congolian Lowland Forest, Guinean mountain forests, Western Guinean lowland forests, Cameroonian Highlands forests, and Congolian coastal forests (Fig. 15).

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