

New record of of Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022 (Ephemeroptera: Baetidae) from the southern Western Ghats, India

Thambiratnam Sivaruban¹⁽ⁱ⁾, Pandiarajan Srinivasan¹⁽ⁱ⁾, Sivaruban Barathy ²⁽ⁱ⁾ & Rajasekaran Isack¹⁽ⁱ⁾

1- PG& Research department of Zoology, The American College, Madurai-625002, India 2- Department of Zoology, Fatima College, Madurai-625018, India

Abstract. Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022	,		
originally documented solely in Thailand, has now been identified for the first time	e		
in the Tamil Nadu region of the southern Western Ghats, India. Prio	r		
discrepancies in the description of Tenuibaetis frequentus Müller-Liebenau 8	x		
Hubbard, 1985 including larval features such as the presence of hindwing pads	S,		
tergalius I and IV ratio, and the number of marginal spines in the paraproct	Article info	27 July	2024
resulted in misidentification, with the species erroneously categorized a	S Accepted:	01 February	2025
Tenuibaetis frequentus in Tamil Nadu until 2023. This comprehensive study	y Published:	22 April	2025
involved a re-examination of <i>Baetis</i> (<i>T.</i>) <i>panhai</i> , leading to the accurate determination of its population in Tamil Nadu. Detailed larval characters of <i>Baeti</i>	e Subject Edito	Subject Editor: Mehdi Esfandiari	
(<i>T.</i>) <i>panhai</i> were provided together with discussion about its taxonomic status and related toxo	taxonomic status and Corresponding author: Thambiratnam Sivaruban		
	E-mail: sivaru	ban270@gmail.c	com
Keywords: India, mayflies, new record, Tamil Nadu, Tenuibaetis frequentus	DOI: https://	doi.org/10.6118	6/jesi.45.2.8

Tenuibaetis was primitively considered as a subgenus by Kang et al. (1994) within the genus Baetis Leach, 1815 designating Baetis pseudofrequentus Müller-Liebenau, 1985. Describing two more species viz., Baetis (Tenuibaetis) inornatus Kang & Yang, 1994 and Baetis (Tenuibaetis) arduus Kang & Yang, 1994, the number of species within Tenuibaetis was originally three. The subgenus Tenuibaetis was established based on the following larval characters described by Kang et al. (1994): 1) mandible with smooth medial margin between prostheca and mola, without setae, spines, or serration; 2) conical segment III of labial palpus; 3) presence of femoral villopore and 4) paraproct with a patch of notched scales. Waltz & McCafferty (1997) synonymized Tenuibaetis with Baetiella based on the shape of the labial palps. Fujitani et al. (2003) disagreed with Waltz & McCafferty (1997) and separated Tenuibaetis from Baetiella and related genera based on the presence of robust setae with a median ridge on the dorsomedial surface of the larval femur and elevated Tenuibaetis to the generic rank. Nevertheless, Kluge et al. (2023) did not accept this generic rank, placing again Tenuibaetis under the subgenus of Baetis based on the combination of larval and imaginal characters. In south India, three species of *Tenuibaetis* were reported via., Baetis (T.) frequentus Müller-Liebenau & Hubbard, 1985, Baetis (T.) kaltenbachi Kluge, Srinivasan, Sivaruban, Barathy & Isack, 2023 and Baetis (T.) bialatus Kluge, Srinivasan, Sivaruban, Barathy & Isack, 2023 (Kluge et al., 2023).

Kubendran et al. (2015) previously described the larvae and imagines from Tamil Nadu as 'Tenuibaetis frequentus' but Kluge et al. (2023) found that this larva did not belong to T. frequentus as they lack pseudobifurcate setae in the tibia. In this contribution, the species which was earlier considered as T. frequentus by Kubendran et al. (2015) was redescribed and identified as Baetis (T.) panhai Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022 based on the larval characters.

The larvae of the new record were collected during January 2023 from the Kottakudi River of Tamil Nadu, India by handpicking and preserved in 80% ethanol. Dissection was carried out using 2-ethoxyethanol and slides were made in Canada balsam. Morphological characters were studied using Magnus MSZ-TR stereo zoom microscope and LABOMED Lx400 microscope. Photos were captured with an AR 6 Pro digital camera and measurements were acquired using Capture 2.2.1 software and further processed in Adobe Photoshop 7.0. The species identification is based on the original descriptions of Kubendran *et al.* (2015) and Suttinun *et al.* (2022) respectively. Terminology is mostly based on Suttinun *et al.* (2022) and Kluge *et al.* (2023). The materials of the new record are deposited in The American College Museum, Madurai, Tamilnadu, India (AMC). Results are as follows:

Class Insecta Linnaeus, 1758

Order Ephemeroptera Hyatt & Arms, 1891

Family Baetidae Newman, 1853

Genus Baetis Leach, 1815

Subgenus Tenuibaetis Kang & Yang (in Kang, Chang & Yang), 1994

Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022 (Figs. 1-19)

Material examined

1 male mature larva (AMC/ZN/283) and 12 larvae (AMC/ZN/284), India, Tamil Nadu, Theni district, Kurangani, Kottakudi River, 10°08'09"N, 77°25'52"E, ca. 632 m. a.s.l., 15.I.2023, leg. P. Srinivasan & R. Isack.

Distribution

India (new record) and Thailand (Suttinun et al., 2022; Kluge et al., 2023).

Diagnostic characters

Detailed larval characters of *Baetis* (*T.*) panhai were provided by Kubendran *et al.* (2015) (wrongly described as '*T. frequentus*'), Suttinun *et al.* (2022) and Kluge *et al.* (2023). Larva of *Baetis* (*T.*) panhai can be distinguished from all other known *Baetis* (*Tenuibaetis*) species by the following combination of characters: i) abdominal terga I–III and V–VIII dark brownish, tergum IV pale, terga IX–X colorless (Figs. 1); ii) mesonotum medially with a pale transverse band (Figs. 2); iii) maxillary palp two-segmented and about 1.4–1.5 times as long as the length of galea-lacinia (Fig. 3); iv) labial palp segment I slightly shorter than the length of the segments II and III combined (Fig. 4); v) labial palp segment II with a poorly developed distomedial protuberance and segment III slightly asymmetrical and conical (Fig. 5); vi) outer margin of femur of all legs with a row of stout, two-channel setae; dorsal surface with numerous stout, two-channel setae of various sizes, mostly elongate and distally widened and rounded (Figs. 6–8); vii) outer marginal stout, two-channel setae of fore tibia significantly small when compared with the mid and hind tibiae (Figs. 12–14); viii) outer margin of tarsus of all legs with row of few stout, two-channel setae only on the proximal half (Figs. 16, 17); xi) posterior margin of abdominal terga II–X bluntly triangular (Figs. 18, 19).

Baetis (*T.*) *panhai* was first described by Suttinun *et al.* (2022) from Thailand. Though Kubendran *et al.* (2015) identified the same species as *Tenuibaetis frequentus* in India. Discrepancies in the original description of Kubendran *et al.* (2015) such as the presence of hindwing pads (Kubendran *et al.*, 2015; Fig. 12), ratio of the tergalius I and IV (Kubendran *et al.*, 2015; Figs. 13, 14) and the number of marginal spines in the paraproct (Kubendran *et al.*, 2015; Fig. 15) leads to the misidentification. However, Kluge *et al.* (2023) stated that this species does not belong to *Tenuibaetis frequentus*, as they lack pesudo-bifurcate setae in the outer margin of the tibia and also questions about the validity of the male imaginal characters as the male imagines are not reared from the larva. The absence of hindwing pads in the larva has conclusively identified that the male imago reported by Kubendran *et al.* (2015) does not correspond to the larva they described, since the male imago they described had hindwings and it might be the male imago of *Nigrobaetis* sp. *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai* by the structure of labium and labrum, setation of the femur, and coloration of mesonotum and terga (Kluge *et al.*, 2023). *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai* didn't share an ecological niche with the *Baetis* (*T.*) *frequentus*. In fact, *Baetis* (*T.*) *frequentus* exhibited a restricted distribution, primarily occupying several sky islands in the Western Ghats of India and Sri Lanka (Selva-kumar *et al.*, 2012; Kluge *et al.*, 2023).



Figs. 1-5. *Baetis* (*Tenuibaetis*) *panhai* Suttinum, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022: 1. Larva, dorsal view; 2. Pronotum and Mesonotum; 3. Maxilla: 4. Labium; 5. Labial palp segment II & III.



Figs. 6–10. *Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai* Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022: 6. Fore femur; 7. Mid femur; 8. Hind femur; 9. Fore tibia setation; 10. Mid tibia setation.



Figs. 11–14. *Baetis* (*Tenuibaetis*) *panhai* Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022: 11. Hind tibia setation; 12. Fore tibia and fore tarsus; 13. Mid tibia and mid tarsus; 14. Hind tibia and hind tarsus.



Figs. 15–19 *Baetis* (*Tenuibaetis*) *panhai* Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022: 15. Base of the hind leg clearly shows the absence of hindwing pad; 16. Tergalius I; 17. Tergalius IV; 18. Posterior margin of abdominal terga IV–X; 19. Closer view of denticles in posterior margin of abdominal terga IV & V.

Selvakumar *et al.* (2016) had already barcoded the COI gene of the Indian population of *Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai*, where it was misidentified as '*T. frequentus*' (GenBank Accession No. LC056074; Selvakumar *et al.*, 2016; Table 1). They also barcoded *Baetis michaelohubbardi* Selva-Kumar, Sundar, and Sivaramakrishnan, 2012 (GenBank Accession No. LC061856; Selvakumar *et al.*, 2016; Table 1), which is, in fact, the true '*T. frequentus*' (Kluge *et al.*, 2023). The results of Selvakumar *et al.* (2016) clearly shows that *Baetis (T.) panhai* forms a distinct monophyletic clade (Selvakumar *et al.*, 2016; Fig. 1). Selvakumar *et al.* (2016) collected *Baetis (T.) panhai* (# LC056074) from the same locality as our collections and their results should be extended to our specimens.

Suttinun *et al.* (2022) reported two more species that are morphologically identical to *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai*, with genetic distances ranging from 15% to 20% (Suttinun *et al.*, 2022; Table 3). Similarly, the genetic distance of the Indian population of *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai* (mentioned as '*T. frequentus*' (# LC056074) in Suttinun *et al.*, 2022) which is morphologically indistinct (Kubendran *et al.*, 2015; Kluge *et al.*, 2023), is around 16% to 19% (Suttinun *et al.*, 2022; Table 3). We remain considering the Indian population of *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai* as a species hypothesis for now without further treatment in this paper because of the absence of nominal morphological differences despite the significant interspecific genetic distance between the Indian population of *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai* and other cryptic complexes of *Baetis* (*T.*) *panhai*. We suspect that geographical isolation and environmental variables are the key drivers for these cryptic species and more studies have to be carried out in the molecular aspects to know the exact status of these cryptic *Tenuibaetis* species.

Author's Contributions

Thambiratnam Sivaruban: Visualization, conceptualization, supervision, review and edit, formal analysis; Pandiarajan Srinivasan: Investigation, methodology, draft preparation, review and edit; Sivaruban Barathy: Visualization, conceptualization, supervision, formal analysis; Rajasekaran Isack: Visualization, conceptualization, project administration, final review and edit.

Author's Information

Thambiratnam Sivaruban	🖂 sivaruban270@gmail.com
Pandiarajan Srinivasan	Srini15.05.1996@gmail.com
Sivaruban Barathy	⊠ iceisack143@gmail.com
Rajasekaran Isack	🖂 barathyruban@gmail.com

- https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8997-9355
 https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8118-3256
- Inteps://orcid.org/0000-0001-0110-5250
 Inteps://orcid.org/0000-0002-9464-6464
- Inteps://orcid.org/0000-0002-9952-4335

Funding

Dr. S. Barathy (Fatima College, Madurai) acknowledge project fund received under DST CURIE core Grant for Women PG Colleges DST/CURIE-PG/2022/11 and DST FIST-SR/FST/COLLEGE/2023/1449(G).

Data Availability Statement

All data supporting the findings of this study are available within the paper.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to Dr Davamani Christober (Principal and Secretary of The American College, Madurai) for providing facilities to carry out this research work.

Ethics Approval

Insects were used in this study. All applicable international, national, and institutional guidelines for the care and use of animals were followed. This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Citation: Sivaruban, T., Srinivasan, P., Barathy, S. & Isack, R. (2025) New record of of *Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai* Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022 (Ephemeroptera: Baetidae) from the southern Western Ghats, India. *J. Entomol. Soc. Iran* 45 (2), 295–301.



DOI: https://doi.org/10.61186/jesi.45.2.8 URL: https://jesi.areeo.ac.ir/article_131275.html



Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022 (Ephemeroptera: Baetidae) حَزَارِش مِدِيد

از مِنوب غربی گاتز، هند

تامبيراتنام سيواروبان 💿، پاندياراجان سرينيواسان 🔍 💷، سيواروبان براتي ً ២ راجاسهكاران اسحاق ២

بخش تحقيقات جانورشناسي، كالج أمريكايي، Madurai-625002، هند

۲- گروه جانورشناسی، کالج فاطمه، مادورای-۶۲۵۰۱۸ هند

	چكيدە: گونە Baetis (Tenuibaetis) panhai Suttinun, Gattolliat & Boonsoong, 2022، كە تاكنون
اطلاعات مقاله	فقط در تایلند گزارش شده بود، اکنون برای اولین بار در منطقه تامیل نادو در جنوب غربی گات، هند شناسایی شده
دریافت: ۱۴۰۳/۰۵/۰۵	است. تناقضات قبلي در توصيف Tenuibaetis frequentus Müller-Liebenau & Hubbard, 1985 از جمله
پذیرش: ۱۴۰۳/۱۱/۱۴	ویژگی های لاروی مانند وجود پدهای بال عقبی، نسبت ترگالیوس I و IV، و تعداد خارهای حاشیه ای در paraproct،
انتشار: ۱۴۰۴/۰۲/۰۲	منجر به شناسایی نادرست گونه panhai، به عنوان Tenuibaetis frequentus تا سال ۲۰۲۳ شد. این مطالعه جامع
	شامل بررسی مجدد Baetis (T.) panhai بود که منجر به شناسایی دقیق جمعیت آن در تامیل نادو شد. صفات دقیق
دبیر تحصصی: مهدی استندیاری	لاروی Baetis (T.) panhai همراه با بحث در مورد وضعیت طبقهبندی آن و گونههای مرتبط ارائه شده است.
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ایمیل: sivaruban2/0@gmail.com	Tomulactic frequentus all 1 1 4 to the last of the second states and the
DOI: https://doi.org/10.61186/jesi.45.2.8	تلمات کلیدی: هند، یکروزهها، کزارش جدید، نامیل نادو، Tenunaeus nequenus