Andricus synophri (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae), a new species of oak gallwasp from Iran

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ABSTRACT. A new species of oak gallwasp, Andricus synophri (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae: Cynipini) is described from Iran. This species is known only from asexual females and induces galls on the twigs of Quercus brantii and Q. libani. Galls are multilocular, develop on lateral buds of young branches. According to its morphology, Andricus synophri belongs to a large group of 12 Andricus species, the "Adleria non-kollari" group. Data on the diagnosis, distribution and biology of the new species are given.

Key words: Cynipini, Andricus, taxonomy, Iran, distribution, new species


Introduction

Iran is a very peculiar country from the faunistic point of view, with its location on the border of the Western and Eastern Palaeartic regions. The Irano-Turanian centre of endemism covers the interior of Turkey, extending eastwards from the beginning of the Central Anatolian Plateau into northwestern Iran. A number of widespread oak gallwasps show their greatest genetic diversity in the eastern mediterranean, suggesting that the Irano-Turanian region may have acted as a major centre of speciation in this group in the past (Rokas et al. 2003; Stone et al. 2001). It remains unclear, however, how much Iranian forests lie within the true centre of this diversity, or whether they represent an eastern limit to the distributions of taxa otherwise found further west. About 20 new species of oak gallwasps has been described in the last decade from Iran and majority of them being until now endemics for this region (Azizkhani et al. 2006; Tavakoli et al. 2008; Pénzes et al. 2009; Melika et al. 2004, 2011).

Some other species described from Syria (Melika 2006) and Turkey (Melika and Stone 2001) has been collected recently in Iran also. Currently 77 species of oak...
new species of oak gallwasp from Iran
gallwasps are listed for Iran which from 49 
species belongs to the large genus Andricus 
Hartig (Chodjai 1980; Sadeghi et al. 2010; 
Melika et al. 2011).

This paper reports a new species, Andricus synophri sp. n., which induces 
galls on the twigs of Quercus brantii Lindley 
and Q. libani G. Olivier (Fagaceae). Data on 
the distribution and biology of the new 
species are given. The galls of this species 
resemble those of Synophus olivieri Kieffer 
and were thought to be galls of Synophrus 
till adult wasps were reared.

Materials and Methods
Current terminology of morphological 
structures follows Liljeblad and Ronquist 
abbreviations follow Ronquist and 
Nordlander (1989), and cuticular surface 
terminology follows Harris (1979). 
Measurements and abbreviations used here 
include: F1–F12: first and subsequent 
flagellomeres; POL, post-ocellar distance, the 
distance between the inner margins of the 
posterior ocelli; OOL, ocellar-ocular distance, 
the distance from the outer edge of a 
posterior ocellus to the inner margin of the 
compound eye; and LOL, the distance 
between lateral and frontal ocelli. The width 
of the forewing radial cell is measured from 
the margin of the wing to the Rs vein.

Scanning electron microscope (SEM) 
images were taken with the Stereoscan 
Leica-360 at low voltage (700V) and 
without coating, in order to preserve the 
specimens. The forewing of the adult were 
photographed directly from the binocular 
microscope with a Canon digital camera 
(Power Shot, SX210 IS). The type material is 
deposited in the following institutions: 
AMNH: American Museum of Natural 
History, New York, USA (curator J.M. 
Carpenter).

NHML: Natural History Museum (British 
Museum), London, UK (curator D. 
Notton)

CAS: California Academy of Sciences, San 
Francisco, USA (curator R. Zuparko)

PHMB: Plant Health and Molecular 
Biology Laboratory, Budapest, Hungary 
(curator G. Melika).

RIFR: Research Institute of Forest and 
Rangelands, Tehran, Iran (curator S.E. 
Sadeghi).

UB: Universitat de Barcelona, Catalunya 
(curator J. Pujade-Villar).

USNM: U.S. National Museum of Natural 
History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 
DC, USA (curator M. Buffington).

Results
Andricus synophri Pujade-Villar, Tavakoli 
& Melika sp. n. 
(Figs. 1–16)
Type locality. Dorood (Lorestan, Iran), 
collected from Quercus brantii galls.

Type material. Holotype asexual female, 
deposited in UB (J.P-V col.) with the 
following labels: “Dorud (Lorestan, Iran), 
xi.2011, M.Tavakoli col.” (white label), 
“Holotype of Andricus synophri Pujade- 
Villar, Tavakoli & Melika n. sp., design, JP- 
V 2014” (red label). Paratypes (105 asexual 
females) with the same labels as the 
holotype (30 deposited in UB JP-V col., 10 
in AMNH, 10 in NHML, 10 in CAS, 20 in 
RIFR, 10 in USNM, 15 in PHMB).

Other material examined. Same data of 
Holotype: 63 asexual females; Marivan 
(Kordestan, Iran), Code 1, Q. brantii, (viii-2011) 
xi-2011: 97 asexual females; Oshtran-Kohe 
(Lorestan, Iran), Code 3, Q. brantii, (viii-2011) 
xi-2011: 171 asexual females; Kaka-reza 
(Lorestan, Iran), Code 4, Q. brantii, (viii-2011) 
xi-2011: 63 asexual females; Bane (Kordestan, 
Iran), code 5, Q. libani, (viii-2011) xi-2011: 33 
asesical females.

Diagnosis. All metasomal tergites with dense 
white setae laterally and dorsally, the anterior 
surface of fore tibia with long oblique setae 
and antennae with 12 flagellomeres put this 
species into the “Adleria-non kollari” group of
Andricus species (Melika, 2006). The median mesoscutal line is absent or very short; the mesoscutum coriaceous almost reticulate, the prominent part of the ventral spine of the hypopygium is needle-like, quite long. Andricus synophri sp. n. most closely resembles Andricus conificus (Hartig), A. truncicolus (Giraud) and A. megatruncicolus Melika, however, it is easily distinguishable from the closely related species by its smaller size (around 3.0 mm) and by the presence of micropunctures on the metasomal tergites, while other three species are more robust, around 4.0 mm and the metasomal tergites without micropunctures. In A. synophri sp. n. F1 slightly shorter than F2, while in A. conificus and A. truncicolus F1 is longer than F2, and F1 equal to F2 in A. megatruncicolus; the body of A. conificus and A. megatruncicolus predominantly is reddish brown, while in A. synophri sp. n. and A. truncicolus are black. The shape of the galls of these four species is quite different and all the four species can be easily identified based on the galls they induce.

**Description.** Only asexual female is known.

**Length.** Body length: 2.0–3.2 mm (n = 60).

**Colour.** Black. Mandibles (except tooth) and frons in some specimens brown. Antenna dark, scapus and pedicelus black. Legs chestnut brown to black, apex of femura light brown, tarsi brownish. Metasoma laterally in some specimens brown, hypopygium brown. Forewing veins brown.

**Head** (Figs. 1–2). Coriaceous, with uniformly very dense long white setae. 2.4 times as wide as long from above, 1.2 times as wide as high in anterior view and as wide as width of mesosoma. Gena coriaceous, broadened behind eye, narrower than cross diameter of eye (2:7), visible in anterior view behind eye. Malar space coriaceous, without striae and malar sulcus, 0.25 times as long as height of eye. POL: OOL: LOL = 5.5: 4.0: 3.0 diameter of ocellus 2.0, ocelli rounded, equal in size and shape. Transfacial distance 1.2 times as long as height of eye and 1.9 times as long as height of lower face (distance between antenial rim and ventral margin of clypeus); diameter of antenial torulus larger than distance between them, distance between torulus and eye margin as long as diameter of torulus. Lower face coriaceous, with elevated median area. Clypeus trapezoid, broader than long with diverging sides, alutaceous, impressed, with elevated median superior area, ventrally emarginate and weakly incised medially, with distinct deep anterior tentorial pits, distinct epistomal sulcus and clypeo-pleurostomal line. Frons coriaceous, with impressions above antennal sockets. Vertex and occiput coriaceous; interocellar area slightly elevated, rugoso-coriaceous. Post-occiput around occipital foramen impressed, with numerous delicate striae extending to postgenal bridge; occipital carina present.

**Antenna** (Fig. 8). Slightly longer than head + mesosoma, 14-segmented; scape around 2.2 times as long as pedicel; pedicel longer than broad, F1 more than 2.0 times as long as pedicel, shorter than F2 and slightly curved and slightly broadened distally; F11 and F12 sometimes indistinctly separated; antennal formula: 6.5, 3(x2), 7(x2), 8, 7, 6, 5, 5, 4, 3, 3, 5, 5.5, 3. Placoid sensilla on F4–F12.

**Mesosoma** (Figs. 3–5). Slightly higher than long in lateral view, with uniform dense white setae. Pronotum uniformly alutaceous, with uniform dense white setae. Anterior rim of pronotum narrow, emarginate; propleuron alutaceous, shiny, with white setae, straight in mediocentral part. Mesoscutum strongly coriaceous, almost reticulate, slightly longer than broad (width measured across base of tegulae); notauli distinct, complete, reaching pronotum, well impressed; median mesoscutal line absent; anterior parallel lines distinct, extending to 2/5 length of mesoscutum; parapsidal line present extending to 2/3 length of mesoscutum. Mesoscutellum uniformly delicately coriaceous, as broad as long, convex, overhanging metanotum. Scutellar foveae subsquared, with coriaceous glabrous bottom, separated by distinct median carina.
Mesopleuron, including speculum, uniformly alutaceous, with dense white setae; mesopleural triangle with weak carinae, pubescent. Metopleural sulcus distinct, delimiting area with very dense white setae, reach mesopleuron in upper 1/2; pre-axilla alutaceous; lateral axillary area coriaceous, without parallel wrinkles, setose; axillary carina broad, smooth, shiny; axillula triangular, with very dense white setae, its sculpture hidden; subaxillar bar smooth, shiny, black, in most posterior end higher than height of metanotal trough; metanotal trough with very dense long white setae, its sculpture hidden, ventral bar with delicate parallel wrinkles. Metascutellum strongly coriaceous, slightly curved ventrally, higher than height of ventral impressed area. Lateral propodeal carinae slightly curved, central area smooth, sometimes with few delicate irregular wrinkles basally, with only few white setae along lateral propodeal carinae; lateral propodeal area uniformly alutaceous, with very dense white setae; nucha short, coriaceous.

Forewing (Fig. 10). Longer than body, margin with dense short cilia; radial cell 4.6 times as long as broad, R1 and Rs nearly reaching wing margin; Rs + M distinct, its projection reaching basalis at half height; areolet small, triangular, well-delimited or collapsed.

Legs. Anterior surface of foretibia with long, oblique setae. Tarsal claws with strong acute, deep basal lobe (Fig. 9).

Metasoma (Figs. 6–7). Slightly shorter than head+mesosoma, as high as long in lateral view, smooth. Second metasomal tergite occupying less than half length of metasoma, densely setose laterally, without setae dorsally; all subsequent tergites with a band of dense white setae posteriorly; micro-punctures present from 3rd metasomal tergite; prominent part of ventral spine of hypopygium long, needle-like, 7.5 times as long as broad, with short sparse white setae ventrally, which not extend beyond apex of spine.

Gall (Figs. 11–16). Galls are multilocular, develop on lateral buds of young branches. The gall is irregular in shape but approximately spherical, 5–20 mm in diameter and sometimes in partially fused agglomerations, like the galls of Synophrus olivieri. It is green when developing and growing, turns greyish like the bark when mature. It is not strongly lignified and can be easily cutted like a cheese ven when the gall is mature. The larval chambers are scattered inside the gall. The gall remains on the tree for several years.

Biology. Only the asexual females are known to induce galls on Quercus brantii and Q. libani (both species belong to the Cerris section of Quercus L.). The galls develop through the summer and mature in November. Adult wasps overwinter in the gall and probably emerge in the following spring. In the laboratory conditions the wasps emerged in late autumn. Quite strong population fluctuations were observed by one of the authors (MT): in some years galls are very abandoned and then next year galls nearly disappear and can be found very rarely.

Etymology. The name refers to the genus Synophrus, galls of S. olivieri from Iran can be easily confused with the galls of A. synophri sp. n.

Distribution. Currently known only from Iran (Lorestan and Kordestan provinces).

Comments. The shape and size of Andricus synophri galls are closely resemble the galls which are induced by an inquilines, Synophrus olivieri, a species also known from Iran and which associates with the same oak hosts (Pènezes et al. 2009). Only a single oak gallwasp host is known till now for the inquilines species of the genus Synophrus: Andricus burgundus Giraud (Cynipidae: Cynipini) known to be attack by Synophrus hispanicus Pujade-Villar (Cynipidae: Synergini) (Pujade-Villar et al. 2003). In this case, the Andricus galls are completely modified and it is impossible to recognize the gall of A. burgundus. It is possible that the galls of A. synophri could be attacked by S. olivieri and in this case the original gall is only moderately modified. This could be the reason while the twigs with A. synophri and/or S. olivieri are identical in shape and size. However, a recent unpublished research done by one of the co-authors (JP-V), showed that what we assign to S. olivieri from Iran is not S. olivieri known from North Africa, the origin site where from the species was described. It is definitely a distinct species, differs from S. olivieri in some peculiarities of morphology, biology and phylogeny and it was already briefly mentioned (Pujade-Villar et al. 2010).
Figures 11–16. Galls of Andricus synophri Pujade-Villar, Tavakoli & Melika sp. n.: 11, 12, 13, and 14 on Quercus brantii, 15 and 16 on Quercus libani.

Discussion

According to its morphology, Andricus synophri belongs to a large group of 12 Andricus species, the “Adleria non-kollari” group, which possess two peculiar characters: the mesoscutum coriaceous, without punctures and the prominent part of the ventral spine of the hypopygium is needle-like and very long: A. assarehi (Melika & Sadeghi 2008), A. caputmedusae (Hartig, 1843), A. conificus (Hartig, 1843), A. coronatus (Giraud, 1859), A. dentimitratus (Retjö, 1887), A. hartigi (Hartig, 1843), A. hungaricus (Hartig, 1843), A. megatruncicolus Melika, 2008, A. mitratus (Mayr, 1870), A. quercustozae (Bosc, 1792), A. tomentosus (Trotter, 1901) and A. truncicolus (Giraud, 1859). Six of them unknown for Iran: A. conificus, A. coronatus, A. hartigi, A. hungaricus, A. mitratus and A. truncicolus (Sadeghi, 2010).

Only three species (e.g. A. conificus, A. megatruncicolus and A. truncicolus) and A. synophri sp. n. have the mesoscutum strongly coriaceous, almost reticulate, while in the rest of the mentioned species, the mesoscutum is coriaceous or coriaceous-granulose, sometimes with some short carinae (rugae) (Melika 2006). Some other characters also accurately differentiate the new species from the other species mentioned, for example, in A. synophri sp. n. the median mesoscutal line is absent, while in A. assarehi, A. caputmedusae, A. dentimitratus, A. hartigi, A. mitratus, A. quercustozae and A. tomentosus the median mesoscutal line always present, distinct, more or less long. The newly described species differs from A. coronatus and A. hungaricus in the length of antennal F1 which is shorter than F2 in the new species and longer than F2 in other
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two species. The differences between A. synophri sp. n. and the three most closely resemble species, A. conificus, A. megatruncicolus, and A. trucicolus, are mentioned in the diagnosis section above. Punctures on metasomal tergites are present in the newly described species and only in three species of “Adleria non-kollari” group, A. conificus, A. hartigi and A. hungaricus.

Finally, the shape of A. synophri galls is very special and cannot be mismatched with galls induced by other species of this Andricus species-group, more of that, A. synophri galls is the only multilocular gall in the group.

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References


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new species of oak gallwasp from Iran

Andricus synophri (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae)

چکیده: گونه جديد زنبور گالزا از ايران Andricus synophri (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae) از گونه های گال زای گوشه نام Maderia (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae: Cynipini) ایران توصیف گردید. این گونه بر اساس ماده ی غیر جنسی و گال های ایجاد شده روی شاخه های گیاه پروتئسی و روی Q. libani و Quercus branti توصیف شد. گال ها به صورت چند خانهای و روی جوانه های جایی شاخه های جوان قرار داشتند. بر اساس ویژگی های مورفولوژیک گونه متعلق به یک گروه بزرگ شامل 12 گونه تحت عنوان گروه Andricus synophri می باشد. اطلاعات مربوط به ویژگی های افتراقی، انتشار "Alderia non kollari" جغرافیایی و بیولوژی گونه جدید ارائه شده است.

واژگان کلیدی: Andricus Cynipini, رده نشانی، ایران، انتشار، گونه جديد.