

INTRODUCTION

Historical

The first described species of the family Cryptophagidae was Dermestes scanicus Linnaeus (1758) Herbst (1792) first established for the species Dermestes cellaris Scopoli (1763) the genus Kryptophagus, Schonherr (1808) changed the spelling to Cryptophagus, which form has been used by all later authors Erichson (1846) first established the family Cryptophagidae for the genera Cryptophagus, Atomaria and one or two small genera placed under the family Nitidulidae Lacordaire (1854) redefined Erichson's family Cryptophagidae to include Telmatophilus Heer The chief authors who dealt the family seriously are LeConte (1862), Ganglbauer (1899), Reitter (1889), Sharp (1900) and Motschulsky (1839) In the later half of the last century numerous genera were referred to the family, many of which were later transferred by Sen Gupta and Crowson (1971) to Languridae

As regards Indian Cryptophagidae, no serious work was undertaken on this group Grouvelle (1916) was the first author to describe 12 species of Cryptophagus, 10 from Darjeeling, 1 from Sikkim and 1 from Barway, of which the author has been able to study all the species except the species C. parallelicolis from Barway Later, Sen Gupta (1980) added 4 new species to this genus from India Johnson (1971) was the first author who published an account on Indian Atomaria with descriptions of 7 new species Indian Henoticus has been dealt by Johnson (1975) and Sen Gupta and Pal (1980). Sen Gupta (1978) established a new genus Himascelis from the Himalayas based on a single species Later Sen Gupta and Pal (1980a) added the 2nd species of the genus from Kashmir. The genus Caenoscelis was unknown to the Indian region Sen Gupta and Basak (1985) discovered a new species from

Nepal Grouvelle (1916) described the lone species of Antherophagus, A. microphthalmus from Darjeeling, but Lyubarsky (1991) mentions two other species A. himalaicus Champion and A. nigricollis Champion from northern India

Other important works on the family Cryptophagidae have been contributed by Bruce (1936), Casey (1900), and the most important work on the genus Cryptophagus has been published by Coombs and Woodroffe (1955) on British Cryptophagus, and Woodroffe and Coombs (1961) on North American Cryptophagus. As regards Atomaria, Johnson (1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1971, 1971a, 1971b, 1973a, 1975a, 1978, 1986) published a series of papers on the genus. Crowson (1980) dealt with the distribution of Cryptophagidae, Bousquet (1989) reviewed the North American genera of Cryptophagidae, Otero (1989,1990) dealt with Cryptophagus and Micrambe of Canary islands

Classification

Since the establishment of the family Cryptophagidae by Erichson (1846) for the genera Cryptophagus and Atomaria, later workers had a tendency to place all small and pubescent beetles under this family and it became almost a dumping ground for numerous small genera

As far as classification within the family Cryptophagidae is concerned, the basis of modern system was laid down by LeConte (1862), who divided the family into three tribes Telmatophilini, Cryptophagini and Atomarini. Ganglbauer (1899) considered Cryptophagini and Atomarini as subfamilies of Erotylidae and Telmatophilini as a tribe of Cryptophaginae. Most of the later workers followed the view of LeConte. In Junk's Coleopterus Catalogue, Schenkling (1923) classified the family under four subfamilies, viz., Telmatophilinae, Cryptophaginae, Atomarinae and an additional subfamily

Ephisteminae Crowson (1955) in his book "Natural Classification of Families of Coleoptera" classified the family into three subfamilies Telmatophilinae, Cryptophaginae and Atomarinae Sen Gupta (1967) in his unpublished thesis has redefined the family and classified the group under four subfamilies - Hypocoprinae Reitter, Cryptophaginae LeConte, Atomarinae LeConte and Picrotinae subfam nov He also subdivided the subfamily Cryptophaginae into two tribes Acryptini tribe nov. and Cryptophagini. Recently, Sen Gupta (1967, 1968, 1968a) and Sen Gupta and Crowson (1971) made a number of changes in the classification of the families of Clavicornia and transferred several genera from the family Cryptophagidae to the family Languridae and Erotylidae More recently, Crowson (1980) classified the family Cryptophagidae into four subfamilies Hypocoprinae (for the single Palaearctic genus Hypocopus Mostschulsky), Alfieriellinae (for the Palaearctic genus Alfieriella Wittmer), Cryptophaginae and Atomarinae He has also placed Caenoscelis Thomson and allied genera including Himascelis Sen Gupta in the tribe Caenoscelini and the New Zealand genera Picrotus Broun and Thortus Broun under the tribe Picrotini in Cryptophaginae, whereas subfamily Atomarinae includes Atomaria, Ephistemus and allied genera. In India so far known representatives of Cryptophagidae are mostly represented by Cryptophaginae and Atomarinae. A modified classification of Crowson (1980) has been introduced here to include the genus Acryptus and also to place this genus and the genus Anathilopus in a higher category

PRESENT CLASSIFICATION OF THE FAMILY CRYPTOPHAGIDAE

FAMILY CRYPTOPHAGIDAE Erichson

