



Genus: *Lejota*



Lejota ruficornis male habitus

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Genus: *Lejota* Rondani, 1857

Family: Syrphidae

Subfamily: Eristalinae

Tribe: Milesiini

Number of species of this genus found in Europe: 2

Description

Head

The face is black to dark brown, without a facial tubercle, covered with whitish-silver dust (except for the shiny genae); the antennae are placed on the quite characteristic frontal prominence; the basoflagellomere is brown, slightly broader than long; the arista is hair-like, covered with very short hairs, almost bare; the eyes are bare and the males can be holoptic (in *L. korsakovi*) or dichoptic (in *L. ruficornis*).

Thorax

The thorax is black to dark brown, mainly shiny.

Wings

Completely covered with microtrichia; the veins are light brown to yellowish basally, and darker brown apically; vein R_{4+5} is straight, with the last section less than 1/2 as long as crossvein r-m. The crossvein r-m stands before the middle of the discal cell.

Legs

The legs are simple, without additional structures, and mostly black to dark brown, only the apex of all femora and basal and apical parts of tibiae can be yellowish.

Abdomen

The abdomen is oval, brown to black, without pale markings; the sternites are brown, with a projected posterior margin of sternite 4 in the male.



Lejota korsakovi male frons



Lejota ruficornis male frons



Lejota korsakovi male sternite 4

General comments on identification to species level

Differential diagnosis

Lejota Rondani, 1857 comprises small-sized flies with dark brown to blackish body (without any markings on the body) and bare eyes. In the past, *Lejota* Rondani, 1857 was considered synonym of other black-coloured genera, like *Cheilosia* Meigen, 1822 by Sack (1932) or *Myolepta* Newman, 1838 by Séguy (1961). There are only two species in Europe: *L. korsakovi* (Stackelberg, 1952) and *L. ruficornis* (Zetterstedt, 1843).

Morphologically, *Lejota* is very similar to *Cheilosia*, but they can be distinguished by the absence of a facial tubercle in *Lejota* (present in *Cheilosia*), parafaciae only visible on the ventral half of the face in *Lejota* (present along the whole face in *Cheilosia*), and in the shape of the male genitalia.

Lejota may look similar to *Myolepta*, but it differs by the lack of facial tubercle in both sexes (*Myolepta* males have a facial tubercle, but female do not). Moreover, *Lejota* has the metasternum bare (metasternum with long hairs in *Myolepta*), femora without

ventral spines (femora with ventral spines in *Myolepta*), and the anterior anepisternum is bare (anterior anepisternum with long hairs in *Myolepta*).

Other similar-looking genera may be *Melanogaster*, *Chrysogaster*, and *Chrysosyrphus*; all of them with the last section of the vein R_{4+5} longer than crossvein r-m ($R_{4+5}+M_1$ is shorter than crossvein r-m in *Lejota*). It can also be confused with *Psilota*, but this genus has hairy eyes (bare eyes in *Lejota*) or with *Xylota* or *Chalcosyrphus*, but these genera have the crossvein r-m at or beyond the middle of cell dm (crossvein r-m is placed before the middle of cell dm in *Lejota*).



Lejota ruficornis male head lateral



Cheilosia antiqua male head lateral



Myolepta trojana male head lateral



Chrysogaster basalis male habitus



Lejota korsakovi male habitus



Xylota abiens male habitus

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Geographical distribution and global diversity

This genus is widespread in Fennoscandia, throughout Russia and eastern Siberia, while in central Europe it is restricted to mountainous areas.

Presence in Europe

Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation - European Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine.

Biology

Adult behaviour and flower preferences. The preferred environment of this genus are boggy stream-sides and pool edges in open forest from the *Picea* forest zone upwards to alpine grassland, flushes with streamlets (slope mires) in *Alnus viridis* scrub, open overmature and senescent mire forest of *Betula* sp. and *Populus tremula* in Sweden, including areas where forest fires have resulted in the presence of large quantities of dead wood. *Lejota* is usually found close to water and the flies settle on low-growing vegetation and fallen trunks of *Picea*. The adults visit flowers of *Caltha palustris*, *Filipendula*, *Ledum palustre*, *Prunus avium*, *Ranunculus* sp., *Pimpinella saxifraga*, *Sambucus*, *Sorbus*, *Spiraea*.

Reproduction and larval biology. The developmental stages are not described.

Seasonal life cycle. The flight period is from the end of May to the end of June, July at higher altitudes.



Type species: *Psilota ruficornis* Wahlberg in Zetterstedt, 1843

Common names:

FI - kulopuuharit;

NB - gammelledblomsterfluer

List of species found in Europe:

1. *Lejota korsakovi* (Stackelberg, 1952)
2. *Lejota ruficornis* (Zetterstedt, 1843)

References

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