

## What is *Seitneria* Tavares, 1928 (Hymenoptera, Figitinae)?

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Tavares (1928) described the monotypic genus *Seitneria*, from a material collected by M. Seitner in Austria reared from *Strobilomyia laricicola* (Karl, 1928), an anthomyid fly (Diptera) attacking *Larix* (Pinaceae) cones.

Weld (1952: 98, 174) listed *Seitneria* under the Anacharitinae, but he also mentioned that *Seitneria* should be considered as belonging to the Figitinae (Weld, 1952: 174), and also placed it as a synonym of *Figites* Latreille (Weld, 1952: 102).

Ronquist (in Ros-Farré *et al.* 2000: 474) mentions that he studied *Seitneria* material reared in Austria, and concluded that this genus does not belong to the Anacharitinae but to the Figitinae. According to Ronquist, *Seitneria* is most similar to *Melanips* Haliday, *Sarothrus* Hartig and *Amphithecus* Hartig (Figitinae), and stated that *Seitneria* differs from *Figites* in many characters (but he did not mention these characters).

Unfortunately, we have not been able to study the type material of *Seitneria austriaca*

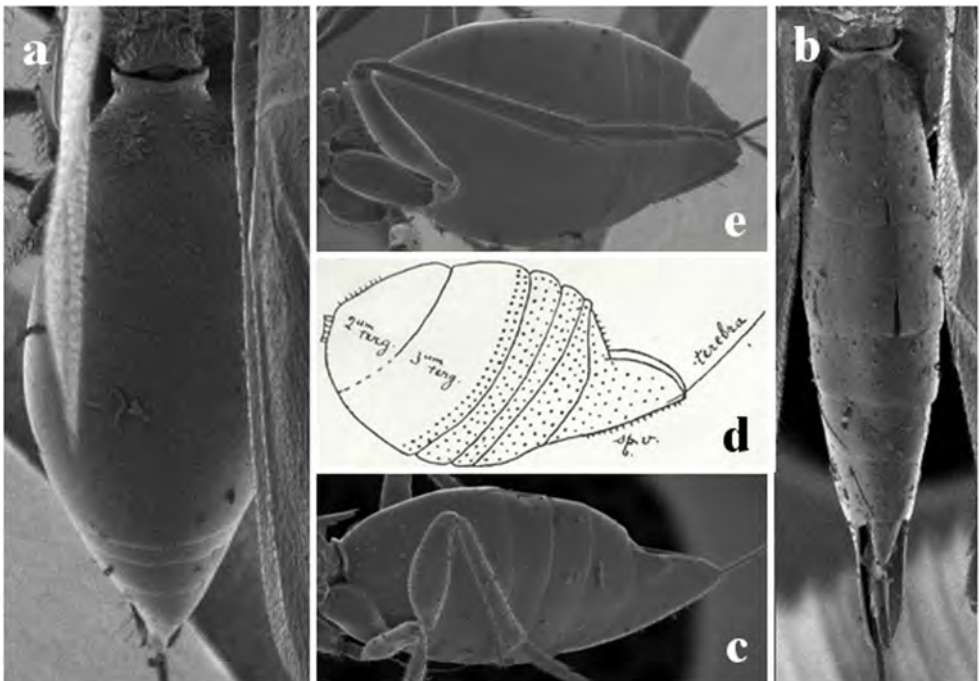


FIGURE 1. Metasoma in dorsal view of (a) *Sarothrus* and (b) *Amphithecus*. Metasoma in lateral view of (c) *Sarothrus*, (d) *Seitneria* (original drawing by Tavares, 1928) and (e) *Amphithecus*.

Tavares, 1928 (the only species included in this genus); the type material of *Phaenocarpa seitneri* Fahringer, 1929 (Hymenoptera: Braconidae), the most abundant parasitoid collected by Seitner in *Larix* cones attacked by the anthomyid above mentioned, is deposited in the Naturhistorisches Museum Wien (Achterberg & Roques 1987). However, the type material of *Seitneria austriaca* is not deposited in this museum (M. Vizek, *pers. com.*). Ronquist (*pers. com.*) does not have the *Seitneria* specimens that he studied, and he does not remember where these specimens are deposited.

According to the original description, *Seitneria* cannot be considered as synonym of *Figites* as Weld (1952) proposed; *Seitneria* is distinguished from *Figites* having compound eyes glabrous, sculpture on mesoscutum, and areolet well developed in forewings. On the other hand, also according to the original description, *Seitneria* lacks two lateral patches of setae at the base of metasoma (only some setae can be seen laterally, in front and above, according to Tavares) and thus it cannot be 'most similar' to *Melanips*, *Sarothrus*, and *Amphithecus* because these three genera have two lateral patches of setae at the base of metasomal T2 (Figs 1a-b) as stated by Ronquist (in Ros-Farré *et al.* 2000). In the description, Tavares mentioned that the female metasoma is thicker in the middle than at the apices: this character corresponds to *Sarothrus* (Fig. 1a), not *Amphithecus* (Fig. 1b). However, in the drawing of Tavares (Fig. 1d), the metasoma is similar to *Amphithecus* (Fig. 1c) because the hypopygium is very large and protruded covering the third valvula and 9<sup>th</sup> tergum, not like in *Sarothrus* (Fig. 1e). On the other hand, *Seitneria* has wings hyaline like *Sarothrus* (uniformly brown in *Amphithecus*), but male face is sculptured like *Amphithecus* (smooth in *Sarothrus*).

In summary, according to the original description, *Seitneria* is morphologically related

to *Amphithecus* and *Sarothrus*. However, the information from the original description is not enough to distinguish *Seitneria* from these two genera; thus, we consider *Seitneria* as 'genus dubidum, genus inquerendum' until conspecific specimens of *S. austriaca* can be examined (the type material is presumably lost). This generic status does not contradict Ronquist conclusions, because he was not able to distinguish *Seitneria* from these genera after studying some specimens presumably belonging to *S. austriaca*; for this, the description of metasomal T2 pubescence from Tavares «some setae laterally, in front and above» probably means that *Seitneria* has two lateral patches of setae at base of T2, as *Amphithecus* and *Sarothrus* have.

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