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ON THE BIOLOGY OF *DER/SP/A MAYAE* CHATTERJI, SARUP &  
MENON (*Tenebrionidae* : Coleoptera)

*Derispia mayae* is the only species present in India representing the genus *Derispia*. The members of this genus have striking resemblance to lady bird beetles. *D. mayae* is distributed in regions like Kodaikanal and Kerala (Chatterji et al 1960) frequenting situations where moss and algae grow. Though a commonly occurring insect nothing is known about its biology. Studies were hence undertaken on it, results of which are presented in this paper.

Eggs are laid in batches of 8 to 34 (average 24) among growths of moss and algae. The egg (Fig. 1) is smooth, orange-yellow coloured and elongate oval measuring 0.9 mm in length and 0.6 mm in width; it is laid upright. Eggs hatch in 5 days.

The first instar larva is smooth orange-yellow and oval measuring 0.8 x 0.6 mm; it turns brownish black generally. It does not feed and moults to the second instar grub in one day. The larva undergoes five instars, the 1st to 5th instar lasting 1, 4-6, 2-3, 2-4 and 4-8 days respectively. It has the same body form throughout which is inflated and oval; it has a shining appearance. The colour soon after moulting is yellow which ultimately turns to black; excepting in the full grown larva. The head is hyponathous. The dorsal part of the prothorax and 4th and 5th abdominal segments of full grown larva is yellowish and the rest of the body black (Fig. 2). Total larval duration takes from 17 to 20 days.

Pupa is exarate measuring 2.5 x 1.9 mm., brownish and oval with a thin membraneous sheath endorsing the appendages (Fig. 3). The pupa is attached to the substratum at its posterior and pupal period lasts for 3-5 days.

Adults and grubs of *D. mayae* are frequently observed in colonies infesting growths of moss and algae on tiles, wooden structures and terraces of buildings and on compound walls. They are more abundant during rainy seasons, Sluggish in their habits, they feed on mosses and fungi,

REFERENCES

Chatterji, S., Sarup P., Radhas Menon, M. G., (1960). Taxonomic Studies on Indian Tenebrionidae (Coleoptera), I - A New species of *Derispia* Lewis, Indian J. Ent. 23, 241-243.

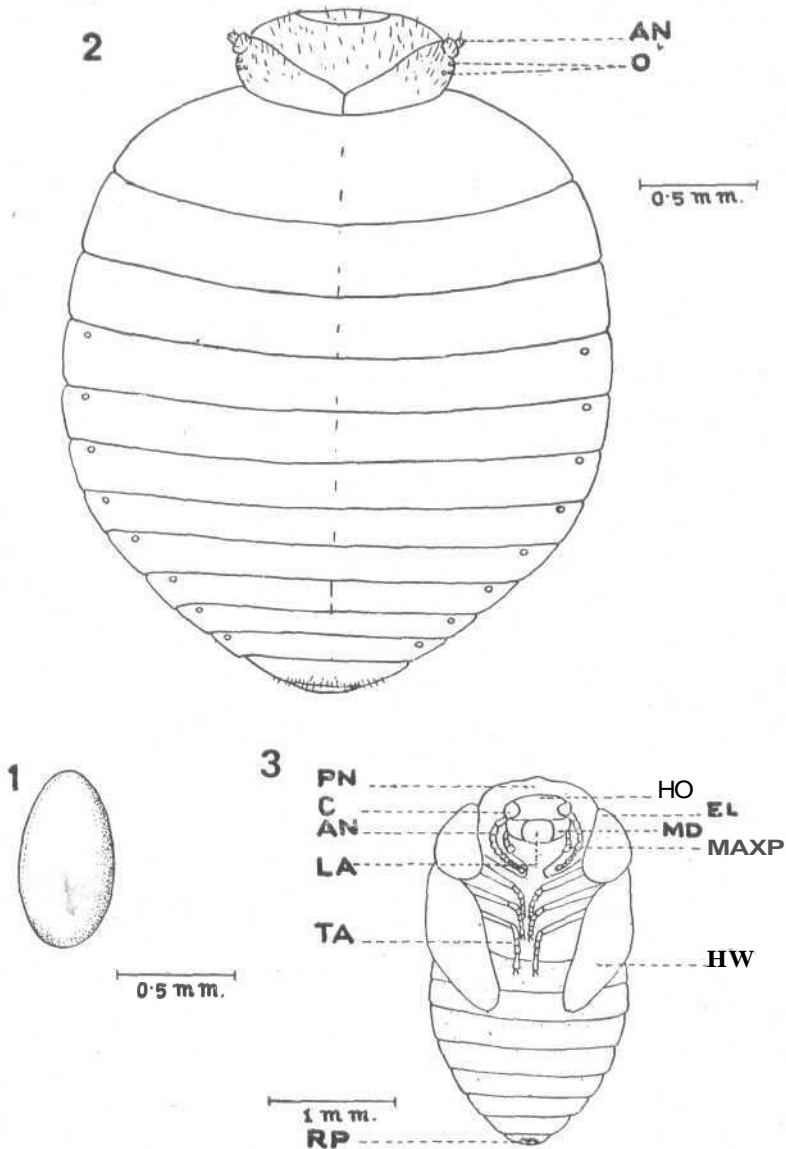
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DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF *DERISPIA MAYAE*



I. egg                      2. Full grown larva                      3. Pupa

AN — Antenna  
 EL — Elytron  
 HW — Hind wing  
 LA — Labrum

O — Ocelli  
 MD — Mandible  
 PN — Pronotum  
 TA — Tarsi

HD — Head  
 MAXP — Maxillary palp  
 C — Compound eye  
 RP — Rectal plate