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MINTHEA RETICULATA, A SPECIES OFTEN MISTAKEN FOR *M. RUGICOLLIS* IN MALAYSIA

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Minthea reticulata has been frequently mistaken for the commoner *Minthea rugicollis*, both powder -post beetles occurring in Malaysia. This is because *M. reticulata* lives sympatrically with *M. rugicollis* (personal observation), and locally the literature contains only information on *M. rugicollis* (Browne 1938, Menon 1957). This paper is therefore intended to compile records of *M. reticulata* occurring in Malaysia and clarify differences between the two species.

Minthea reticulata can be differentiated from *M. rugicollis* based on the following characters outlined in Table 1 (Gergberg 1957).

Table 1. Important characters used to distinguish *M. reticulata* from *M. rugicollis*

	Minthea reticulata	*Minthea rugicollis*
Pronotum Lateral margin:	Approximately 10 hairs (Plate 1)	Approximately 19 hairs (Plate 2)
Middle cavity:	Net-like pattern	Punctures
Antenna	Last segment equal in length to the penultimate	Last segment slightly longer than the penultimate

I find the lateral margin of the pronotum and the hairs on the lateral margin very useful characters for identifying the two species. The lateral margin of *M. reticulata* is distinctly toothed and bears between 7 and 12 stiff narrow hairs whilst that of *M. rugicollis* is rather smooth and bears between 13 and 19 broad hairs. The hairs of *M. reticulata* are slightly longer than *M. rugicollis* (Figures 1, 2 and 3).

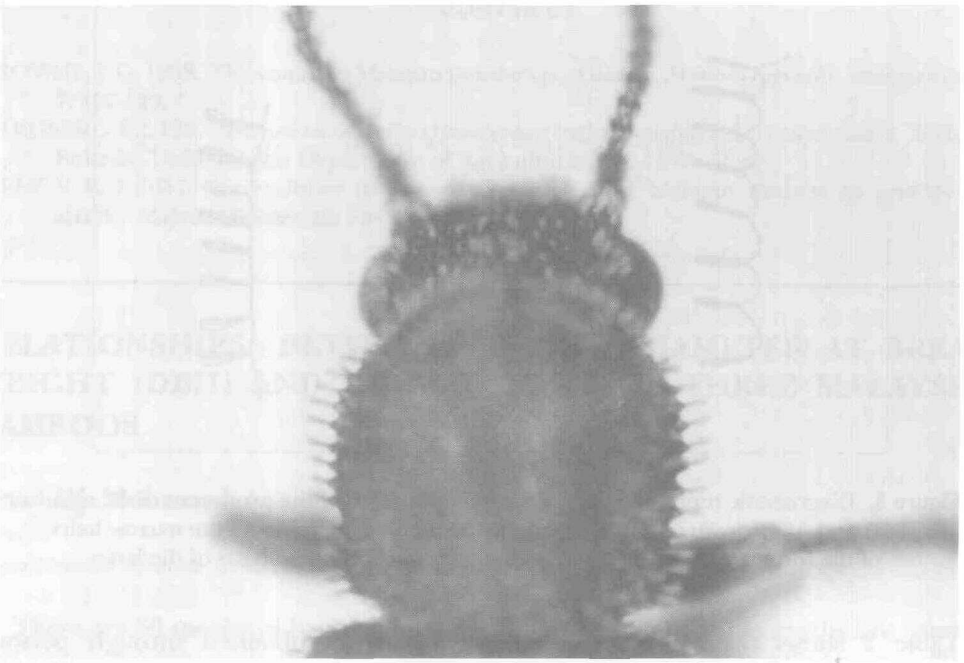

Figure 1. The lateral margin of the pronotum of *M. reticulata* bearing 12 hairs

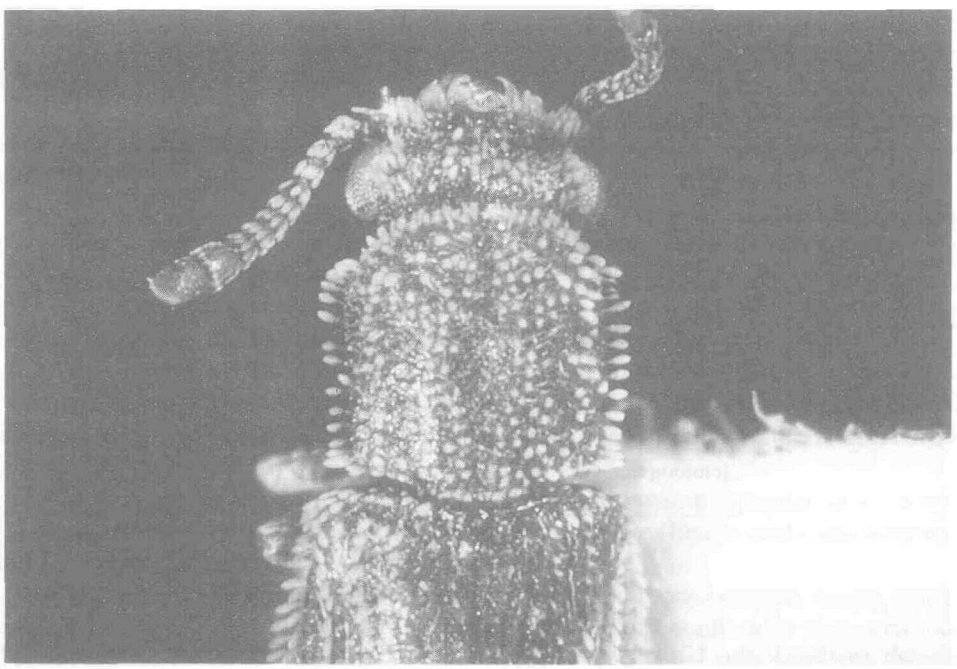

Figure 2. The lateral margin of the pronotum of *M. rugicollis* bearing 15 hairs

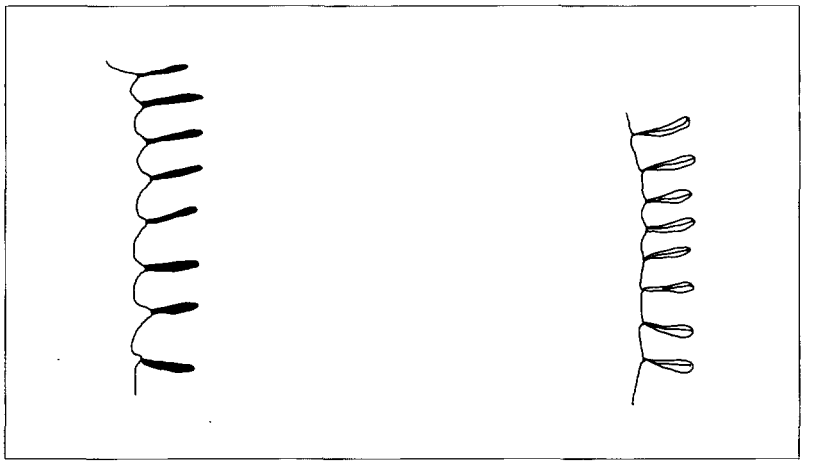

Figure 3. Diagramatic representation of the lateral margin of the pronotum of *M. reticulata* (left) and *M. rugicollis* (right) showing the denticulate margin and the narrow hairs of the former and the relatively smooth margin and broad hairs of the latter

Table 2 shows records of *M. reticulata* in Malaysia obtained through personal compilation. In addition to the repositories listed in the table, I examined the collections of the University of Malaya and National University of Malaysia but did not find any specimens of *M. reticulata.* The Sabah Forest Industries has also no records of *M. reticulata.*

Table 2. Records of *M. reticulata* in Malaysia

Locality	*Host*	*No.*	*Date*	*Repository*
-	Yellow meranti	1	20/11/56	FRIM, Kepong
-	Red meranti log	1	18/7/58	FRIM, Kepong
FRI, Kepong	-	6	10/2/68-8/4/69	FRIM, Kepong
Sungai Petani, Kedah	Crate containing seasoned timber	7	14/1/74	FRIM, Kepong
Selangor	Window frame of merbau	3	23/3/49	Agriculture Department, Kuala Lumpur
Tanjung Bungah, Penang	-	1	11/54	Agriculture Department, Kuala Lumpur
-	Meranti, Kempas, Jelutong timbers	7	1978-1987	Agriculture University of Malaysia

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