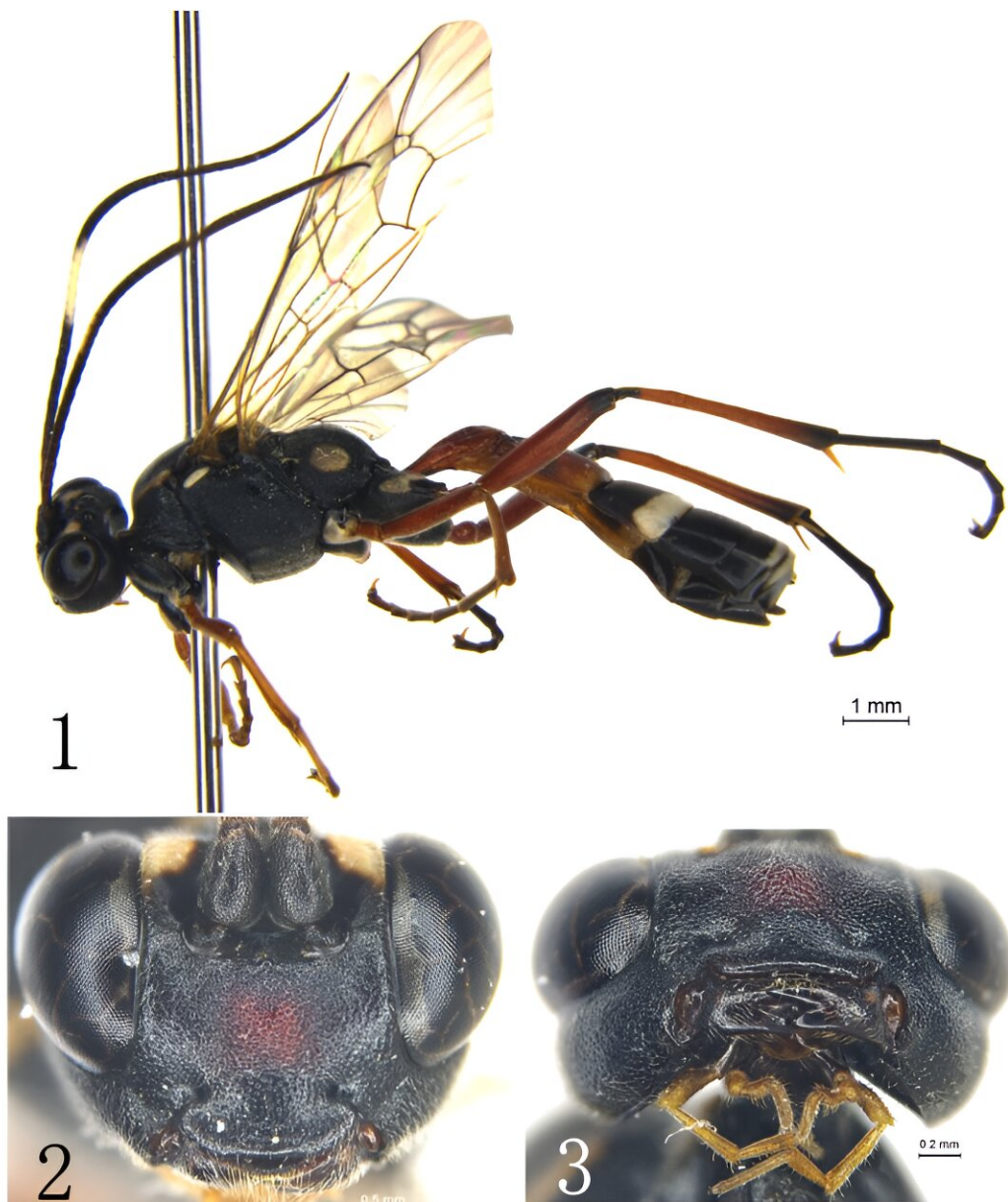


# Parasitic creature with unique teeth found in forests of Asia: It's a new species

December 6 2023, by Aspen Pflughoeft, The Charlotte Observer



*Serraticheumon maculatus* Sheng & Riedel gen. et sp. nov., holotype, ♀ (CBDPC). 1. Habitus, lateral view. 2. Head, anterior view. 3. Mandibles. Credit: *European Journal of Taxonomy* (2023). DOI: 10.5852/ejt.2023.910.2355

In a forest in southern China, a parasitic creature flew through the air. Suddenly, a net enveloped the animal. Scientists looked at their successful catch—and discovered a new species.

Equipped with bug-catching nets, researchers ventured into a [forest](#) in Guangzhou in 2022, according to a study published Dec. 1 in the *European Journal of Taxonomy*. While there, they captured a spotted wasp.

Intrigued, researchers searched for any records of similar-looking wasps and found seven more specimens in archive collections, the study said. They studied the insects and realized they'd discovered a new species: *Serraticheumon maculatus*, or the spotted parasitic wasp.

Spotted parasitic wasps have a body about 0.5 inches in length and slightly shorter wings, researchers said. Their faces are "flat," and their mouths have two "distinctly separated teeth."

A photo shows a spotted parasitic wasp. It has a black body with lighter-colored patches that researchers described as "drop-shaped" and "large white and red spots." Its six legs are reddish-brown.

A close-up photo shows the wasp's wings. The wings are a translucent yellow with dark brown veins and a glossy appearance.

Male spotted parasitic wasps have "serrated" [antennae](#), the study said. These antennae seem to have a similar shape to a leafy plant.

Researchers have not identified the spotted parasitic wasp's host animal, the study said. Based on the wasp's anatomy, they suspect its host is a type of butterfly or moth larvae.

So far, spotted [parasitic wasps](#) have been found in China, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Researchers said they named the new species after the spots on its body.

The new species was placed in a new genus and identified by its antennae shape, unique teeth, [body shape](#) and other subtle physical features, the study said. Researchers did not provide a DNA analysis of the [new species](#).

The research team included Mao-Ling Sheng, Matthias Riedel and Zhong Wang.

**More information:** Mao-Ling Sheng et al, A new genus and species of Ichneumonini Latreille (Hymenoptera, Ichneumonidae, Ichneumoninae) from Oriental Region, *European Journal of Taxonomy* (2023). [DOI: 10.5852/ejt.2023.910.2355](#)

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