

**A New Species of *Diploplectron* from California,
with a Description of the Female of
Diploplectron reticulatus Williams
(Hymenoptera: Sphecidae,
Astatinae)**

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The genus *Diploplectron* consists of small solitary wasps that keep close to the ground. Little is known of their biology, but two species have been observed storing their burrows with lygaeid bugs.

About a dozen species of *Diploplectron* are known. These are chiefly from the United States but the genus is also represented in South Africa.

A new species from California is described below and the female of *Diploplectron reticulatus* Williams is also described.

***Diploplectron diablensis* Williams, new species.**

(Figure 1).

MALE, holotype: Length 5.5 mm. Black; mandibles with a creamy white spot at base, reddish for apical portion, clypeus with a creamy white spot on each side; pronotal lobes creamy white; fore and middle coxae and femora nearly to quite black; posterior femora reddish brown though irregularly blackish basad; fore wings somewhat dusky apically; hind wings with a dusky subapical spot; abdomen red, dusky at extreme base above. Ocelli in an acute triangle, fore ocellus distant from eye margin by one and one-third to one and one-half its diameter, posterior ocelli distant from eye margin by about three-fourths to seven-eighths their narrower (transverse) diameter. Front margin of

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clypeus conically produced, somewhat drawn out and a little upcurved at the tip. Antennal segments 3 and 4, and also 12 and 13 subequal. Malar space about one-third the diameter of the mandibles. Head, thorax, and propodeum above finely reticulate; sides of propodeum finely reticulate but roughened by well-spaced pimple-like granulations and postero-dorsad by short carinulae; posterior face of propodeum finely reticulate, interspersed with granules, and with a triangular depression dorsad. Spines and spurs dark, hairs pale. Fore wings with the entire length of the marginal cell somewhat less than the stigma but shorter than submarginal cells 2 and 3 along cubitus, first and second recurrent veins running into submarginal cells 1 and 2 or the first recurrent is interstitial with the first transverse-cubital vein; the third submarginal cell variable, bulging distad and of equal length above and below, or the vein is longer below (posteriorly).

HOLOTYPE, *male*, in fresh condition, from Mount Diablo, Contra Costa County, California, at 2,000 feet elevation, in the live oak chaparral association, August 30, 1949.

ALLOTYPE: None, the female is unknown.

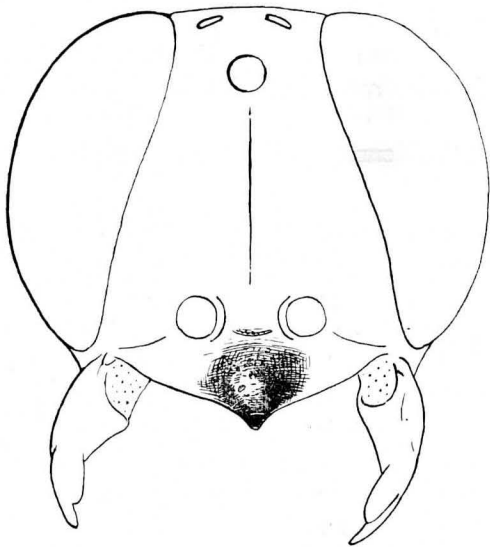


Figure 1. *Diploplectron diablensis*. Male, holotype. From Mount Diablo, California.

PARATYPES: 13 males, topotypical, July 6 and 11, and August 17, 21, 23, 24, 26, and 30, 1950. All were collected by F. X. Williams. They range in length from 4.75 to 6 mm. In some, the hind femora are almost entirely reddish.

This species is related to *Diploplectron reticulatus* Williams (1946, pages 648-650) from Tucson, Arizona. *Diploplectron reticulatus* differs from *D. diablensis* in being more finely sculptured, having smaller ocelli, the fore ocellus being at least two and one-half times its diameter distant from the eye, the posterior ocelli being fully one and one-half times their diameter from the eye. The venation and antennae are paler and there is no lateral whitish clypeal spot.

The simple conically pointed clypeus serves to distinguish both *D. diablensis* and *D. reticulatus* from *Diploplectron vierecki* Pate and *Diploplectron kantsi* Pate (1941, pages 4-7) which are from Texas.

***Diploplectron reticulatus* Williams.**

(Figure 2).

Diploplectron reticulatus WILLIAMS, 1946, pp. 648-650.

This species was described from a single male collected at Tucson, Arizona, May 20, 1920 (F. X. Williams).

FEMALE: Length 4 mm. Black; pro-, meso-, and metanotum and abdomen shining; mandibles except at dark apex, and the

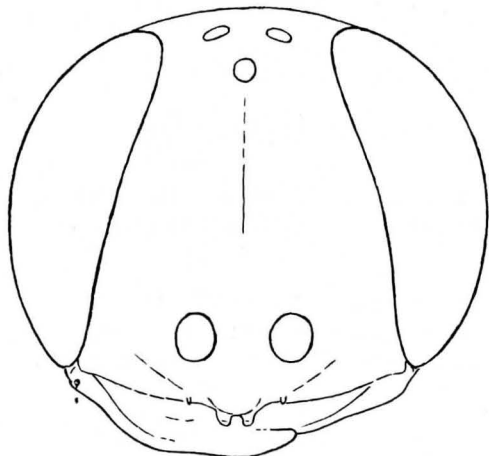


Figure 2. *Diploplectron reticulatus*. Female. From Prescott, Arizona.

basal antennal segments beneath largely reddish; first and second femora very dark brown, their tibiae and tarsi brownish, posterior tibiae reddish brown; venation chiefly brown, and a slight brownish suffusion just beyond the marginal and third submarginal cells; abdomen red. Sculpture of fine reticulations, no shallow depressions among the reticulations. Margin of clypeus narrowly bidentate apically, the teeth curved upwards; in addition, there is an indistinct lateral tooth (figure 2). Ocelli relatively small, forming less than an equilateral triangle, each posterior ocellus about one and one-half times its diameter removed from the compound eye. Antennae slender, segments 3 and 4, and also 11 and 12 subequal, segment 12 very shallowly depressed on one face and margined on one side. Scutellum more shallowly reticulated than scutum; disc of propodeum not sulcate nor carinate, pleurae of propodeum with some well spaced carinulae among the reticulations; the posterior face with transverse wrinkles and a triangular depression dorsad. Pygidium narrow, with sparse punctures. Legs with the usual stiff hairs; fore tarsal comb fully twice the diameter of the respective segments. Marginal cell shorter than stigma and shorter than submarginal cells 2 plus 3, first recurrent and first transverse-cubital veins nearly interstitial, the recurrent vein barely within the first submarginal cell at apex.

This description of the female is based on a specimen loaned me by Dr. Karl V. Krombein. It is from Fort Prescott, Arizona, April 29, 1936, Karl V. Krombein Collection (H. Morrison, Collector).

I am indebted to Dr. Krombein for permission to describe this wasp.

LITERATURE CITED

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