

Miscellanea chernetologica (Arachnida: Pseudoscorpiones), based on the collection of the Natural History Museum in Vienna, Part 2

Разрозненные заметки по ложноскопионам (Arachnida: Pseudoscorpiones) на основе коллекции Музея естественной истории в Вене, Часть 2

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КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: Pseudoscorpiones, Atemnidae, *Diplothemnus*, синонимия.

ABSTRACT. Revision of the syntypes of *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971 showed this species not only to have originally been misplaced in the genus *Rhacochelifer* Beier, 1932 and the family Cheliferidae, but also to represent a new subjective junior synonym of *Diplothemnus insolitus* Chamberlin, 1933, syn.n., family Atemnidae.

РЕЗЮМЕ. Ревизия синтипов *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971 показала, что этот вид не только изначально был неверно помещен в состав рода *Rhacochelifer* Beier, 1932 и семейства Cheliferidae, но и то, что он — новый младший субъективный синоним вида *Diplothemnus insolitus* Chamberlin, 1933 (syn.n.) из семейства Atemnidae.

Introduction

This is the second note to present the results of my study of some type material from the famous pseudoscorpion collection of the Natural History Museum in Vienna (NHMW). This paper deals with revision of *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971, a species described only from a few females and a nymph from southern Iran [Beier, 1971], and never since rediscovered.

The status of *R. iranicus* has only once been discussed since its proposal, that is, in connection with the description of *R. schawalleri* Dashdamirov, 1999, from Azerbaijan. No type material of the former species was thereby revised [Dashdamirov, 1999].

Only rather recently have I got the opportunity to restudy the type material of *R. iranicus* Beier, 1971. To my surprise, this species appears to have been assigned to a wrong genus and family. Instead of representing both *Rhacochelifer* Beier, 1932 and the family Cheliferidae Risso, 1826, *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971 is actually a new junior subjective synonym of

Diplothemnus insolitus Chamberlin, 1933, family Atemnidae Chamberlin, 1931.

Identity of *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971

The series of syntypes is in alcohol (NHMW), complete, containing 3 ♀♀ and 1 tritonymph; the label reads as follows: Iran, 56 km W Shiraz, under bark (*Salix* sp.), 16.IV.1970, leg. F. Ressler (translated from German).

It is the female syntypes that served for the original description. The morphometric data given by Beier [1971] are entirely correct.

Superficially, the animals do resemble Cheliferidae. However, the chela of the palp shows the venom organ and venom tooth to be present only on the fixed finger (Fig. 2). The mobile finger is completely devoid of a venom duct, but a modified seta (lamina defensor), which is normally associated with the venom tooth [Chamberlin, 1931: 133; Muchmore, 1981: 58–59], is visible not only on the fixed finger, but also on the mobile one, even though somewhat reduced in size. The subterminal seta on all tarsi is simple, non-denticulate, whereas in *Rhacochelifer* species it is denticulate or at least with 1–2 spinules. Furthermore, the flagellum (Fig. 1) consists of four blades and, although this character is not always stable (e.g., the number of blades in the flagellum in Chernetidae Menge, 1855 and Cheliferidae is usually three, rarely four), this clearly indicates an assignment in the family Atemnidae. The presence of a well-visible granulation on the carapace and pedipalps, coupled with a well-developed pair of eyes and a distal position of the tactile seta on tarsus IV, shows that *R. iranicus* represents the genus *Diplothemnus* Chamberlin, 1933. Moreover, the proportions and size of the palps lie well within the variation range of *Diplothemnus insolitus* Chamberlin, 1933.

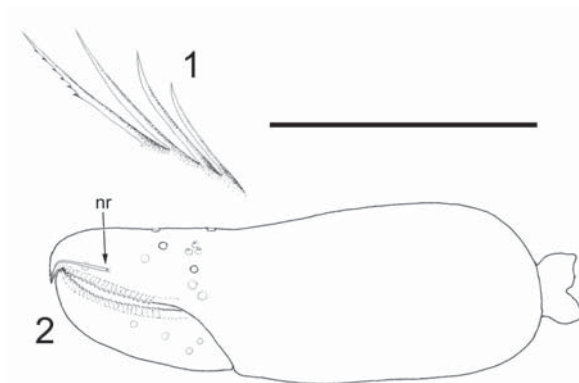
Thus, the measurements (in mm, with standard ratios in parentheses) are as follows: femur, 0.70 X 0.25 (2.8); patella, 0.68 X 0.30 (2.3); chela, 1.05 X 0.35 (with pedicel 3.0, without pedicel 2.7); hand, 0.72 (2.0); movable finger, 0.38 (hand X 1.89); fixed finger with 18, movable finger with 22 teeth. Only the trichobothriotaxy somewhat differs, especially on the medial side of the fixed finger. However, as a direct, side-by-side comparison with other available material of *D. insolitus* shows, this character is subjected to strong variation, thus hardly being useful for species discrimination. In general, the variability of all these characters has already been discussed in due detail elsewhere [Dashdamirov & Schawaller, 1993].

D. insolitus is a widespread species ranging from Southern Europe to the Himalaya. It has repeatedly been recorded in Iran and adjacent countries as well [e.g. Harvey, 1990]. All above evidence allows for the conclusion to be drawn that *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971 is a new junior subjective synonyms of *Diplothemnus insolitus* Chamberlin, 1933, **syn.n.**

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Figs 1 & 2. *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971, ♀ syntype: 1 — flagellum; 2 — interior view of right chela, Scale bar: 0.5 mm (2) and 0.09 mm (1).

Рис. 1 и 2. *Rhacochelifer iranicus* Beier, 1971, синтип ♀: 1 — флагеллум; 2 — правая хела, вид сбоку изнутри (nr — nodus ramosus). Масштаб: 0,5 мм (2) и 0,09 мм (1).

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