

A new *Garcorops* species from Madagascar copal (Araneae: Selenopidae)

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Abstract

Garcorops jadis sp. nov. is described from one male specimen enclosed in copal, a hardened, subfossil diterpenoid resin from the Sambava area, Madagascar. The taxonomy of the family Selenopidae and the relationships of the new species are briefly discussed.

Key words: Arachnida, Araneae, Selenopidae, *Garcorops*, new species, Madagascar, copal, subfossil

Introduction

Spiders enclosed in Tertiary Baltic and Dominican amber are well known (Petrunkevitch 1942, 1958; Bachofen-Echt 1949; Wunderlich 1986, 1988; Poinar 1992). However, interesting spider inclusions have also been found in the more recent copal (Wunderlich 1986, 1988). Copal is a hardened, polymerised, subfossil diterpenoid resin (Lambert & Poinar 2002; Scalarone *et al.* 2003) which, contrary to amber, has not yet lost most of its volatile terpenes (Poinar 1992; Scalarone *et al.* 2003). While amber is of Tertiary age or older (Wunderlich 1986, 1988; Poinar 1992; Ross 1998), copal is estimated by different authors to be between a few hundred and four million years old, i.e. of Holocene, Pleistocene or Pliocene age (Schlee 1984; Wunderlich 1986; Poinar 1992; Anderson 1997; Dubois 1998). A large part of the copal in the world is produced by broad leaved trees of the family Fabaceae (Mägdefrau 1968). On the North-East coast of Madagascar, substantial amounts of copal with inclusions are found, originating from resin of *Hymenaea verrucosa* Gaertner (Poinar 1992; Poinar & Brown 2002). Inclusions in copal are mostly recent species, but extinct species have been found (Hills 1957). The author could obtain a piece of copal from the Sambava area, North-East Madagascar, containing a large male spider belonging to the family Selenopidae.