

A new species of *Stasimopus* from the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (Araneae, Mygalomorphae, Ctenizidae), with notes on its natural history

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Abstract

A new species of ctenizid trapdoor spider is described, *Stasimopus mandelai* **sp. nov.**, from the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. This species occurs syntopically with *S. schoenlandi* Pocock and a number of other mygalomorph spiders at the Great Fish River Nature Reserve. Illustrations, photographs, and additional notes on burrow architecture and general natural history are provided.

Key words: trapdoor spiders, Ctenizidae, *Stasimopus*, new species, taxonomy, South Africa

Introduction

Stasimopus is a relatively species-rich genus of ctenizid trapdoor spiders endemic to Namibia and South Africa. Hewitt (1915a) stated that these spiders were more or less restricted to the Cape Provinces and the Free State in South Africa, but assumed that additional specimens would probably be found in the more northern provinces once those areas were more thoroughly sampled. He also suggested that the majority of species were allopatric, as only occasionally two or more species have been found at a single locality.

C. L. Koch (1842) described *Actinopus caffrus* Koch, and half a century later, Simon (1892) described the genus *Stasimopus* to properly accommodate this species. After the establishment of *Stasimopus*, a number of new species were identified and described. Pocock (1897, 1898, 1900, 1901, 1902a, 1902b) was among the first authorities to work extensively with this genus, but it was Purcell (1902, 1903a, 1903b, 1908) and Hewitt (1910, 1913, 1914, 1915a, 1915b, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1927) who described the vast majority of the 46 currently recognized species and subspecies (Platnick 2004). These two