

New Zealand species of *Steneotarsonemus* Beer (Acari: Tarsonemidae)

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Abstract

New Zealand *Steneotarsonemus* (Acari: Tarsonemidae) comprises three species: *Steneotarsonemus* (*Neosteneotarsonemus*) *ramus* **sp. nov.** collected from *Poa litorosa* in Tagua Bay, Auckland Island; *Steneotarsonemus* (*Mahunkacarus*) *mayae* **sp. nov.** found under leaf sheaths and on flower panicles of *Dracophyllum strictum* Hook in Awakino; and *Steneotarsonemus* (*Steneotarsonemus*) *spirifex* (Marchal) collected from ryegrass and pasture soil in Palmerston North and The Glen. Keys to world species of *Steneotarsonemus* (*Neosteneotarsonemus*) and *Steneotarsonemus* (*Mahunkacarus*) are provided.

Key words: Acari, Tarsonemidae, *Steneotarsonemus* (*Neosteneotarsonemus*) *ramus* sp. nov., *S.* (*Mahunkacarus*) *mayae* sp. nov., description, New Zealand

Introduction

The family Tarsonemidae comprises 529 described species in 40 genera worldwide (Lin & Zhang 2002). New Zealand records for this family are scarce. Spain and Luxton (1971) listed only two common species, *Polyphagotarsonemus latus* (Banks) and *Phytonemus pallidus* (Banks), and three undetermined species in their catalogue of New Zealand mites. After three decades, the number of named species of Tarsonemidae in New Zealand was still only 11 (Zhang & Rhode 2003), with over 90% of these being common widespread species that have been moved around the world on horticultural crops/products and on honey bees. An unpublished taxonomic study of New Zealand Tarsonemidae in 1999–2000 by Z.-Q. Zhang identified 57 species and showed that most of the New Zealand species of Tarsonemidae are endemic and waiting to be described. This paper on the genus *Steneotarsonemus* Beer is the first in a series describing the Tarsonemidae of New Zealand.