Austrostigmaeus gen. n. (Acari: Prostigmata: Stigmaeidae),
with the description of a new species from Australia

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Abstract

A new genus, Austrostigmaeus, is proposed for a new species, A. walteri from Western Australia. Austrostigmaeus is similar to Pilonychiopus Meyer and Neilstigmaeus Gerson & Meyer in the absence of leg tarsal claws and the presence of a developed arolium. Comparative characters for separating Austrostigmaeus gen. n., Gymnostigmaeus Eharas & Ueckermann, Neilstigmaeus Gerson & Meyer, Pilonychiopus Meyer and Summersella Gonzalez-R. are given. Both adult sexes and the deutonymph female are described and illustrated.

Key words: Acari, Prostigmata, Stigmaeidae, new genus, new species

Introduction

The family Stigmaeidae currently contains 30 genera (Fan & Zhang 2005; Fan & Walter 2005; Eharas & Ueckermann 2006), many of which have a pair of developed tarsal claws on each leg, however, a few genera have lost the tarsal claws and evolved a specialized membranous arolium, like that of Pilonychiopus Meyer known from South Africa (Meyer 1969, Meyer & Ueckermann 1989) and Neilstigmaeus Gerson & Meyer from Australia (Gerson & Meyer 1995). Here a new genus is proposed for a new species, collected from Australia, which shares these characters.

Material and methods

Line drawings were made in pencil using a camera lucida attachment on a microscope and inked with Rotring Rapidograph Pens. Measurements made using stage-calibrated ocular.