



A new species of the genus *Zercon* (Acari, Zerconidae) from Turkey

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Abstract

A new species of zerconid mite, *Zercon kezbaniremae* sp. nov., is described from Turkey (Acari: Zerconidae). A key to the adults of the genus *Zercon* known from Turkey is given.

Key words: Acari, taxonomy, Zerconidae, *Zercon*, Turkey

Introduction

Zerconids are soil and litter mites with an idiosomal length varying between 200–700 µm. They are weakly sclerotized free-living mites occurring mostly in humus and litter and among mosses. They are oligophagous predators whose diet includes nematodes (Martikainen & Huhta 1990). Their life cycle includes four active stages, larva, protonymph, deutonymph and adult.

Thirty eight genera of the family Zerconidae are known from the Northern Hemisphere, but only three of these genera are known from Turkey (*Prozercon*, *Rafas* and *Zercon*). *Zercon* is the richest genus in Turkey based on the number of species. The known Turkish fauna includes 18 species of *Prozercon*, one species of genus *Rafas* and 35 species of *Zercon* (Błaszak 1979; Urhan & Ayyıldız 1993, 1996a, 1996b; Urhan 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2002; Urhan & Ekiz 2002).

During studies of the zerconid mites of Turkey, I found an undescribed species of the genus *Zercon*, which is described in this paper. Morphological terminology used in the description follow that of Sellnick (1958), Halašková (1969), Błaszak (1974) and Mašán & Fenda (2004).

Material and methods

Soil and litter samples were collected from the National Park of Yedi Göller, 42 km north of the settlement of Bolu, Turkey, at 800–900 m a.s.l. The soil and litter samples were placed into plastic bags, labelled and transferred to the laboratory. Samples were placed into combined Berlese funnels, and mites were extracted for 5–7 days according to their humidity. At the end of this process, the contents of bottles were transferred into Petri dishes and mites were separated under a stereo-microscope. They were placed in 60% lactic acid for clearing and mounted onto permanent microscope slides using a glycerin medium. The examination and drawing of mites were done using an Olympus BX50 microscope.