



***Mladenoniscus belavodae* n. g., n. sp., a troglobitic oniscid (Isopoda: Oniscidea: Trichoniscidae) from Macedonia**

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Abstract

Mladenoniscus belavodae n. g., n. sp., is described from the Bela Voda Cave in Demir Kapija gorge in southern Macedonia. It is characterized by specific combination of haplophthalmoid external body morphology features and the structure of male pleopods 1 and 2, which are similar to pleopods of species within some trichoniscinae genera. Based on this unique combination of characters a new monotypic genus *Mladenoniscus* n. g. was established. Validity of the current division of the family Trichoniscidae is questioned.

Key words: Trichoniscinae, Haplophthalminae, new genus, new species, Balkan Peninsula

Introduction

Alpioniscus vardarensis (Buturović, 1954), a troglobitic oniscidean isopod, was described from the Bela Voda cave in the Demir Kapija gorge in Macedonia (Buturović 1954). In 1998 and 2007, together with *A. vardarensis*, specimens of an unknown troglobitic oniscidean isopod species were collected in the same cave. While *A. vardarensis* was numerous and present throughout the cave, specimens of the unknown species were rare and sporadically distributed. Because of their smaller size, they were hardly distinguishable from the numerous juveniles of *A. vardarensis*. This was probably the reason why they were not discovered earlier in this easily accessible and frequently visited cave. Because of unique combination of morphological characteristics present in the studied specimens, a new genus was established for this new species. Specific characteristics and combination of features make the new species unique in the family Trichoniscidae, and it is one additional reason which questions the validity of the current division of the family into three subfamilies (Tabacaru 1993) and the criteria used for it.

Taxonomy

***Mladenoniscus* n. g. Karaman**

Type species, *Mladenoniscus belavodae* n. sp. Karaman

Diagnosis. Body elongated with convex, ornamented tergites; antennula with elongated terminal article; maxilliped palp terminally bearing strong setae; terminal article of male endopodite of pleopod 1 setose, longer than basal article, basal article with longitudinal medio-ventral carina, endopodite of male pleopod 2 three segmented, terminal article spine like; exopodite and endopodite of uropod articulated almost on the same level; epimera of pleonites 3–5 well developed.