Subfamilial affiliation of *Neoscirula* (Acari: Prostigmata: Cunaxidae) and descriptions of three new species of this genus from Brazil

JACOB DEN HEYER¹ & TATIANE MARIE MARTINS GOMES DE CASTRO²

1Setor de Zoologia, Departamento de Entomologia, Fitopatologia e Zoologia Agrícola, Escola Superior de Agricultura “Luiz de Queiroz”, Universidade de São Paulo, Piracicaba, São Paulo, Brasil, 13418-900. E-mail: jacob.den.heyer@gmail.com
South African address: Department of Entomology and Zoology, University of the Free State, P.O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa. Website:www.uovs.ac.za

2Departamento de Fitossanidade, UNESP, Campus de Jaboticabal, São Paulo, Brasil, 14884-900. E-mail: tatianemarie@yahoo.com.br

Abstract

The original affiliation of the genus *Neoscirula* Den Heyer to the subfamily Coleoscirinae Den Heyer, 1979 is maintained. Three new species of this genus are described and illustrated, viz. *N. flechtmanni* sp. nov., *N. oliveirai* sp. nov., and *N. queirozi* sp. nov. A key to the Brazilian and South African species is provided.

Key words: Bdelloidea, Coleoscirinae, Neotropical, Taxonomy, Identification key

Introduction

This is the third paper of a series compiled by the authors during a taxonomical study of the Brazilian cunaxid fauna associated with natural and crop vegetation. In Brazil three species were previously reported, viz., *Cunaxa denmarki* Smiley, *Scutascirus braziliensis* Den Heyer and *Dactyloscirus bison* (Berlese) (Castro & Den Heyer, 2008, in press). Faunistic studies of mites in Brazil from natural ecosystems (Arruda Filho & Moraes 2002, Zacarias & Moraes 2002, Castro & Moraes 2007) and from plants of agricultural importance (Ferla & Moraes 1998, Feres 2000, Feres *et al.* 2002, Ferla & Moraes 2002, Barbosa *et al.* 2005) reported the Cunaxidae only at generic level. One of those studies reported a considerable diversity of this predatory group in the “Mata Atlântica” (Atlantic Forest) which is one of the most important natural ecosystems of Brazil (Castro & Moraes 2007). Recent literature on the Cunaxidae mentions references as to the feeding behaviour of these predatory mites (Walter & Kaplan 1991, Corpuz-Rarus 1995, Walter & Procter 1999, Gerson *et al.* 2003).

Material and methods

The specimens considered in this study were collected in the State of São Paulo, in South-Eastern Brazil within the scope of a project to study the diversity of mites in the ecosystem known as “Cerrado” (localities of Luis Antônio and Pirassununga) and “Mata Atlântica” (Pariquera- Açu). They were mounted in Hoyer’s medium. All types are deposited in Museu de Zoologia “Luiz de Queiroz” at Escola Superior de Agricultura “Luiz de Queiroz”, Universidade de São Paulo, Piracicaba-SP, Brasil.

The adapted (by den Heyer & Castro 2008, in press) dorsal setal notation of Kethley (1990) is adopted; for the chaetotaxy of appendages that of Den Heyer (1981). The classification system is that of Den Heyer...