



Discovery and description of the male of *Tityus uquirensis* (Scorpiones: Buthidae) from the Paria Peninsula, northeastern Venezuela

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Abstract

The male specimen of *Tityus uquirensis* González-Sponga, 2001, a buthid scorpion species endemic to the Paria Peninsula, Sucre State, eastern Venezuela, is described for the first time. The male differs from the female in having elongated and slender pedipalps, a character also found in the males of *T. nematochirus*, *T. meridanus*, *T. surmeridensis*, and *T. quirogae*. Data are provided on *T. uquirensis* biology and morphological variations. *Tityus uquirensis* is the second north-eastern Venezuelan scorpion (together with *T. quirogae*) exhibiting elongated pedipalps. *Tityus uquirensis* geographical distribution is hereby extended to the west, including the southern slope of the Paria Peninsula.

Key words: Scorpiones, Buthidae, *Tityus*, Paria Peninsula, Venezuela

Introduction

The scorpion fauna of the northeastern Venezuelan region has been thoroughly evaluated in recent years, resulting in the addition of a number of new species (Borges *et al.* 2006; De Sousa *et al.* 2006; González-Sponga 1996b, 1997, 2001, 2002; Quiroga *et al.* 2000, 2004; Rojas-Runjaic and De Sousa 2007).

Only scarce information is available on *Tityus uquirensis* (González-Sponga 2001), which description is based on a single female specimen collected in 1996 at the village of Uquire, in the northern slope of the Paria range, Paria Peninsula National Park, Arismendi Municipality, Sucre State, Venezuela.

In May 2002, as part of an ongoing evaluation of a macroendemic area of scorpionism in northeastern Venezuela (De Sousa *et al.* 1999, 2000, 2005, 2006), a *Tityus* male specimen was collected in Paria, belonging to a yet undescribed species with slender and elongated pedipalps. Nine additional field expeditions were carried out in the area, allowing collection of further male and female specimens, and including juveniles. The material was classified as *T. uquirensis* and constitutes the basis of the investigation described in this report, with the goal to complement the diagnosis and original description of *T. uquirensis* and further the knowledge of its biology, natural history and distribution.