Trichoribates and Jugatala (Acari: Oribatida: Ceratozetidae) from the Central and Southern Alps, with notes on their distribution

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Abstract

The present paper deals with five species of oribatid mites of the genus Trichoribates Berlese, 1910 and two species of the genus Jugatala Ewing, 1913 from high mountains of the Central and Southern Alps. A new species, Trichoribates scilierensis sp. nov., collected from South Tyrol (Italy) is described in detail on the basis of adults. In addition, supplementary descriptions and illustrations of six known species, Trichoribates monticolae (Trägårdh, 1902), T. novus (Sellnick, 1928), T. punctatus Shaldybina, 1971, T. trimaculatus (C. L. Koch, 1835), Jugatala angulata (C. L. Koch, 1839) and J. cribelliger (Berlese, 1904) are presented. Trichoribates punctatus is recorded for the first time in Central Europe. The status of old generic names as well as the validity of some species are discussed. The synonymy of T. oxypterus (Berlese, 1910) is rejected and its validity retained. The possible synonymy of Jugatala rotunda Willmann, 1953 with J. angulata is discussed. The distribution of all studied species is discussed.

Key words: Ceratozetoidea, new species, biogeography, Austria, Italy, Alps

Introduction

The oribatid mite genus Trichoribates was established by Berlese (1910) with Murcia trimaculata C. L. Koch, 1835 as type species. The generic name Murcia was first used by C. L. Koch (1835) to encompass several species, which presently belong to different genera. Later, several other authors (e.g. Banks 1895, 1896, 1909; Trägårdh 1902; Hall 1911; Ewing 1909, 1913; Sellnick 1928) used various names for the species of this genus, such as Claviceps, Jugatala, Murcia, Notaspis, Oribata, Oribatella, Oromurcia etc., some of which are now considered to be invalid names in the systematics of oribatid mites. Recently, Subías (2004, 2008) “reintroduced” the generic name Murcia in his list of the world oribatid mites, considering it as a senior synonym of Trichoribates. However, he did not provide any comment on his concept, and the necessity of the re-use of the old genus name is still unclear.

Previously “Murcia” encompassed not only species of Trichoribates, but also representatives of several other genera, such as Scheloribates, Humerbates, Ceratoppia, Ctenobelba etc., which are currently assigned to various families. Therefore, in our opinion, it is meaningless to adopt the name Murcia again, and to give it priority over the name of Trichoribates. This view is shared by Weigmann (2006). Furthermore, according to article 23.9 of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (2000), it is inadmissible to use the name Murcia since it is a nomen oblitum, and has not been used for many years. Thus, in this paper, we accept Trichoribates as a valid genus.