

## Three new Assamiidae (Arachnida: Opiliones) from Cameroon, with a redescription of *Chilon robustus* and comments on related species

CHRISTIAN BAUER & CARLOS E. PRIETO

Department of Zoology and Cell Biology, Faculty of Science and Technology, University of the Basque Country, P.O.Box 644, 48080 Bilbao, Spain. E-mail: carlos.prieto@ehu.es

### Abstract

Assamiids from a small collection at the MRAC in Tervuren provided four species represented with males: *Chilon robustus* Sørensen, 1896, *Ereca treses* sp. nov. (Erecinae), *Bueana vitteli* sp. nov. (Polycoryphinae) and *Rhabdopygus puylaerti* sp. nov. (Hypoxestinae). The revision of syntypes of several related species allowed us to revalidate *Chilon undulatus* Sørensen, 1896 and to postulate that *Rhabdopygus maculatus* Roewer, 1935 does not belong to *Rhabdopygus*.

**Key words:** Taxonomy, new species, Laniatores, Afrotropical Region

### Introduction

The only existing checklist of the order Opiliones for the Afrotropical biogeographical region was compiled by Staręga (1984 for the family Phalangiidae, 1992 for the remainder taxa) and comprises 700 species. The inclusion of taxa described in more recent papers (Kauri, 1985 for Congolian Phalangiidae; Shear & Gruber, 1996 with two Madagascan Cyphophthalmi, and other papers) and neglected papers (i.e., Rambla, 1983, for the Seychelles Islands) increases the number to 720 species. The Republic of South Africa is the best investigated country, mainly due to Kauri (1961), with 186 species, followed by the Democratic Republic of Congo with 142 (see Kauri, 1985 for a more recent contribution).

The harvestmen fauna of Cameroon is rather poorly known, with regard to the number of species and to the quality of descriptions, although Cameroon is the best investigated country in the Gulf of Guinea region. Covering an area of 475,400 km<sup>2</sup>, it is known to be home to just 49 species, which were described by Sørensen (1896: 11 species), Loman (1902: 1; 1910: 3 species), Roewer (1912: 4; 1915: 2; 1923: 2; 1927: 10; 1935: 10; 1940: 1; 1949a: 2 species) or recorded by Roewer (1949b: *Metabiantes pumilio* Roewer, 1927) and Staręga (1992: *Eulacurbs paradoxa* Roewer, 1949). Finally Giribet & Prieto (2003), with the description of *Ogovea cameroonensis*, incorporated the first cyphophthalmid from Cameroon. Thus, 48 of those 49 recorded species were described more than half a century ago in the classic Roewerian style: Short and rigidly coded descriptions with poor drawings without illustrations of the genitals; generic placement based mainly on meristic features (i.e., number of tarsal segments or tergal spines); abuse of monotypical genera based on odd, autapomorphic character states, and classification based on few characters.

The Cameroonian harvestman fauna is currently known to include one ogoveid, one ‘samoid’ (*Microconomma armatipes* Roewer, 1949a), six biantids, eight ‘pyramidopids’ and 33 assamiids. There are no recorded phalangiids from Cameroon although there are undescribed taxa of this family in the MRAC collections. As part of a study of material from Cameroon loaned by the MRAC and the MHNG, we deal in this paper with assamiids. Papers dealing with the remaining species (phalangiids, ‘pyramidopids’ and ‘samoids’) are in preparation.