



A review of the Asian orb weaving spider genus *Pronoides* (Araneae: Araneidae)

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Abstract

The Asian orb weaver spider genus *Pronoides* Schenkel, 1936 (Araneidae) is reviewed. A new species, *Pronoides sutaiensis* n. sp., is described, and *P. brunneus* Schenkel, 1936, the type species, is redescribed and illustrated. In addition, *Pronoides ampliabdominis* Song, Zhang & Zhu, 2006 is transferred to *Cnodalia* Thorell, 1890 (**new combination**).

Key words: Arachnida, taxonomy, new species, new combination

Introduction

The Asian orb weaving spider genus *Pronoides* Schenkel, 1936 and its type species *Pronoides brunneus* Schenkel, 1936 were described by Schenkel (1936) based on a female juvenile from Gansu Province, China. Members of this genus have a characteristic appearance: pear-shaped carapace; oval abdomen having a pair of anterior humps dorsally; sclerotized epigynal plate having a depression on each lateral side; ligulate epigynal scape; and a strongly curved palpal embolus. Sexual size dimorphism is slightly pronounced in both known species, with females up to 1.2 times larger than males. These species can be found in coniferous and broad-leaved forests of Asia (Marusik *et al.* 2007). To date, *Pronoides* comprises a world fauna of two species: *P. brunneus* Schenkel, 1936 and *P. ampliabdominis* Song, Zhang & Zhu, 2006. *P. brunneus* is distributed in the eastern Palaearctic, while *P. ampliabdominis* is only distributed in China (Platnick 2010; Song, Zhu & Chen 1999).

Recently, while examining the spider specimens collected from Liupanshan National Natural Reserve, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China, we found a new species of the genus *Pronoides*, and here we describe the new species under the name of *Pronoides sutaiensis* n. sp.

In addition, we re-examined the type specimen of *Pronoides ampliabdominis* Song, Zhang & Zhu, 2006 and found that it is congeneric with the type species of the genus *Cnodalia* Thorell, 1890 and thus misplaced in *Pronoides*.

The aim of this study is to review the Asian genus *Pronoides* by redescribing *P. brunneus* and describing the new species from Liupanshan National Natural Reserve (Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region) and to transfer *P. ampliabdominis* Song, Zhang & Zhu, 2006 to the genus *Cnodalia*.

Material and methods

All measurements are given in millimeters. Carapace length was measured from the anterior margin to the rear margin of the carapace medially. Total length is the sum of carapace and abdomen length, regardless of the petiolus. The measurements of the legs are given as follows: total length (femur, patella + tibia, metatarsus, tarsus). All specimens are preserved in 75% alcohol and were examined and drawn under a Tech