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A new species of *Scytodes* from Algeria (Araneae: Scytodidae), with a review of the species from the Maghreb

JOHAN VAN KEER¹ & ROBERT BOSMANS²

¹ Bormstraat 204 bus 3, 1880 Kapelle-op-den-Bos, Belgium. E-mail: johan.van.keer1@telenet.be

² Terrestrial Ecology Unit, Ledeganckstraat 35, B-9000 Gent, Belgium. E-mail: rop_bosmans@telenet.be

Abstract

Four spitting spider species in the genus *Scytodes* are recorded from the Maghreb: *Scytodes annulipes* Simon, 1907, **stat. n.** (elevated to species rank), *S. major* Simon, 1885, *S. velutina* Heineken & Lowe, 1832 and *Scytodes seppoi* Bosmans & Van Keer, **sp. n.** The male and female of the latter are described and illustrated. No recent records of the commonly cited *S. thoracica* (Latreille, 1804) can be provided, so earlier citations are considered to be erroneous. Images, illustrations and new distribution data of the other three known species in the Maghreb are given.

Key words: Spitting spiders, taxonomy, new species, Mediterranean, new record, new status

Introduction

The *Scytodidae* Blackwall, 1864 is a relatively small family of haplogyne spiders with a peculiar dome-shaped carapace. They are globally distributed and include only five genera worldwide. *Scytodes* is the most species rich genus, which encompasses 220 species (Platnick 2014). Commonly known as “spitting spiders”, most of them are nocturnal, hiding in holes and under stones during the day. Most of the *Scytodidae* are restricted to tropical regions with only a few species occurring in areas with a temperate climate. The common *Scytodes thoracica* (Latreille, 1802) occurs throughout Europe while the Mediterranean region has ten species (Helsdingen 2013). Brignoli (1976) gave a first general account of the family, Dunin (1992) reviewed the genus in Soviet Union, Rheims et al. (2006) in Yemen, Özkütük *et al.* (2013) in Turkey and Zamani (2014) in Iran.

Despite the large area of the Maghreb countries, only four species were previously found from the region. In this paper a new species is described.

Material and methods

The material examined was collected in 1983–1987 by RB throughout Algeria using hand collection or pitfall traps. Collecting in Morocco and Tunisia was undertaken during short excursions, to Morocco in February 1996, July 1999, February 2007, April 2012 and December 2013, as well as to Tunisia in January 1995, December 1999, December 2000, January 2003, March 2005 and May 2006. Specimens are kept in 70% ethanol and were examined and illustrated using an Olympus SXZ9 and Wild M5 stereomicroscope. Further details were studied using an Olympus CH-2 stereoscopic microscope with a drawing tube.

Structures of the left palps are depicted. Male palps were detached and transferred to glycerol for examination under the microscope. Female copulatory organs were excised using sharpened needles and then transferred to clove oil for examination under the microscope. Later, palps and epigynes were returned to 70% ethanol.

Photographs were taken with a Moticam 5MP camera attached to a Realux stereoscopic microscope. Somatic morphology measurements were taken using a scale reticule in the eyepiece of the stereo microscope and are in mm.

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