

Redescription of the milliped *Myrmecodesmus mundus* (Chamberlin) (Polydesmida: Pyrgodesmidae)

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Abstract

Myrmecodesmus mundus (Chamberlin, 1943), a minute pyrgodesmid milliped from Veracruz, Mexico, is redescribed with high magnification drawings of the gonopods of the type specimens. Significant differences appear to exist between the gonopods of the holotype and paratypes, and the latter may warrant recognition as a separate species. The basic gonopodal pattern is similar to that of an undescribed, small-bodied congener occurring some 800 mi (1,280 km) to the north in Texas, USA, and the species appear to be related. The general features of a “species group” of *Myrmecodesmus* may be beginning to emerge — small-bodied forms with curvilinear telopodites, with or without elaborations, and divided prefemoral processes in which the caudal or anterior branch may be lost. The name *Eirenyma* Chamberlin, 1943, is available for such an entity.

Key words: *Myrmecodesmus mundus*, gonopod, telopodite, prefemoral process

Introduction

While describing a species of *Myrmecodesmus* Silvestri from Texas as part of my survey of United States pyrgodesmid millipeds (Shelley 2003), I examined the types of every congener that appeared similar from published accounts to ensure that this was indeed a new species. *Myrmecodesmus mundus* (Chamberlin, 1943), from Veracruz, Mexico, appeared especially interesting because its gonopodal telopodite, a simple uncinat blade according to the illustration (Chamberlin 1943, fig. 164), closely resembled that of the Texas species under low magnification. However, when I mounted the gonopod of the *M. mundus* holotype on a slide and examined it under high magnification (400x) under a compound microscope, I found it to be more complex than Chamberlin's figure showed, to the point that redescription is in order. There are also two male paratypes from a site ca. 60 mi (96 km) west of the type locality whose gonopods show what may be significant differences, so the