

Two new species of Ascidae (Acarina : Mesostigmata) from India

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Abstract

Two new species viz., *Lasioseius kshamae* and *Gamasellodes andhraensis* are described and illustrated from India.

Key words: *Lasioseius kshamae* sp. nov., *Gamasellodes andhraensis* sp. nov., India

Introduction

The family Ascidae contains a very large number of acarine species that are found in almost all habitats. Taxonomic studies of the family like that of many other acarine families began only with the work of Berlese (1885), and are still at an early stage. However, it was Voigts and Oudemans (1905) who proposed the name Ascinae (the oldest family-group name) and established the familial concept based on certain morphological features. The modern concept of the family and its constituent species are of comparatively recent origin. Lindquist and Evans (1965) most recently revised the familial concept of Voigts and Oudemans (1905). Halliday *et al.* (1998) while reviewing Australian ascid mites estimated thirty-four ascid genera occurring throughout the world and they also expressed their opinion to revise the family once again.

Out of the thirty-four ascid genera, only twelve genera are reported from India. Around a hundred described species of *Lasioseius* mites are known from all over the world (Karg, 1980; Halliday *et al.*, 1998). Until recently only eleven species of plant-, soil- and nest-inhabiting *Lasioseius* mites are known to occur in India (Chant, 1960; Menon and Ghai, 1963; Bhattacharyya, 1968; Gupta and Paul, 1992; Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 1996; Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 1997, 2001; Bhattacharyya and Bhattacharyya, 2001; Bhattacharyya and Sanyal, 2002a). The genus *Gamasellodes* is estimated to have a global strength of fourteen species (Halliday *et al.*, 1998), and in India this genus is represented by eight species