

Symphytognathidae (Araneae), a spider family newly recorded from China

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Abstract

The family Symphytognathidae is reported from China for the first time. A new species of the genus *Anapistula* Gertsch, 1941, named *Anapistula appendix* sp. nov., is described and figured. The spider was recorded in a cave in Hainan, the second-largest island in southern China.

Key words: *Anapistula*, new species, Hainan, cave

Introduction

The family Symphytognathidae includes tiny (usually smaller than 1 mm in body length), lungless, orb or sheet-web building spiders, and can be separated from other spiders by the following combination of characters: the chelicerae are more or less fused, the female pedipalp is either reduced to an uni-segmented lobe or absent, the labium is much wider than long, and the sternum is broadly truncate posteriorly (Forster & Platnick 1977).

The family is widespread in the tropics of the southern hemisphere but due to their minute size they are rarely collected (Saaristo 1996). At present some 6 genera and 42 species are recorded worldwide (Platnick 2006).

On one expedition to Hainan Province with the objective of collecting cave fauna from 14 March to 22 April of 2005, an interesting female spider was collected. On the basis of characteristics of the eyes, chelicerae and female genitalia, the spider was recognized as a new species of the genus *Anapistula* Gertsch, 1941, in the family Symphytognathidae. It is the first time the family Symphytognathidae is reported from China, and is the third reported species of this genus in Asia (Harvey 1998; Ono 2002).