



Oribatid mites of the family Astegistidae (Acari: Oribatida) in Mongolia

BADAMDORJ BAYARTOGTOKH

Department of Zoology, Faculty of Biology, National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar 210646, Mongolia.

E-mail: bayartogtokh@num.edu.mn

Abstract

The oribatid mite family Astegistidae is represented in Mongolia by four species in two genera. A new species, *Cultroribula taigagica* sp. nov., collected from cool temperate forests in Northern Mongolia is described based on adults. In addition, three known species, *Astegistes pilosus* (C.L. Koch, 1840), *Cultroribula dentata* Willmann, 1950 and *Cultroribula vtorovi* Krivolutsky, 1971 are recorded for the first time from Mongolia, which are redescribed along with data on their distribution and ecology. A key to Mongolian species of Astegistidae is given.

Key words: *Astegistes*, *Cultroribula*, new species, redescrptions, identification key

Introduction

The study of oribatid mite biodiversity in Mongolia is the subject of ongoing research as part of biodiversity assessments in various habitats of the country. In the course of these studies, several interesting species of oribatid mites have been found including four species belonging to the genera *Astegistes* and *Cultroribula*, which are discussed in the present work.

The family Astegistidae was erected by Balogh (1961) to encompass three genera: *Astegistes* Hull, 1916, *Cultroribula* Berlese, 1908 and *Furcoribula* Balogh, 1943. Later, Hammer (1966, 1971) proposed two more genera, *Maorizetes* and *Sulcoribula* from New Zealand and Fiji Islands, respectively. However, she did not designate the family placement of these genera.

Though their newly proposed genus, *Furcoppia*, shares similar features with the members of Astegistidae, especially the genus *Cultroribula*, Balogh and Mahunka (1966) included it in the family Metrioppiidae. In the same work, the above authors proposed another new genus, *Multoribula*, which they provisionally placed in Astegistidae.

Subsequently, Covarrubias (1967) proposed the new genus, *Lamellozetes*, with two new species from Chile, which the author also tentatively included in Astegistidae.

In the latter review of word oribatid genera, Balogh (1972) added two of these genera (*Lamellozetes* and *Maorizetes*) in Astegistidae, while *Furcoppia* remained in the family of Metrioppiidae. The above author proposed a new family taxon, Multoribulidae for *Multoribula*, but, the genus *Sulcoribula* remained without family placement even after this comprehensive work.

More recently, Mahunka (1983, 1985) added two more taxa, *Furcoppia* (*Mexicoppia*) and *Cultroribella* (from Mexico and South Africa, respectively) to the family Astegistidae.

In the review of New-Zealand oribatid mites, Luxton (1985) erected a new family taxon, Maorizetidae for the genus *Maorizetes*, however, Subias (2004) did not accept the validity of this family, and included this genus in Astegistidae.