



## A revision of the spider genera *Chaetopelma* Ausserer 1871 and *Nesiergus* Simon 1903 (Araneae, Theraphosidae, Ischnocolinae)

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### Abstract

*Chaetopelma* Ausserer 1871 and *Nesiergus* Simon 1903 are revised. *Cratorrhagus* Simon 1891 is considered a junior synonym of *Chaetopelma*. *Cratorrhagus tetramerus* (Simon 1873) and the female of *Cratorrhagus concolor* (Simon 1873) are conspecific with *C. olivaceum* (C. L. Koch 1841). *Ischnocolus gracilis* Ausserer 1871, *Ischnocolus syriacus* Ausserer 1871, *Chaetopelma shabati* Hassan 1950 and *Ischnocolus jerusalemensis* Smith 1990 are also treated here as junior synonyms of *C. olivaceum*. *Chaetopelma adenense* Simon 1890 is proposed as a junior synonym of *Ischnocolus jickelii* L. Koch 1875. *Chaetopelma gardineri* Hirst 1911 is transferred to *Nesiergus*. Hence, *Chaetopelma* comprises three valid species: *C. olivaceum* (C. L. Koch 1841); *C. karlamani* Vollmer 1997; *C. concolor* (Simon 1873) n. comb. from the Middle East and northeastern Africa. *Nesiergus*, which appears endemic to the Seychelles archipelago, now comprises three valid species: *N. gardineri* (Hirst 1911) n. comb.; *N. halophilus* Benoit 1978; *N. insulanus* Simon 1903.

**Key words:** spider taxonomy, junior synonym, Mediterranean, Middle East, Seychelles

### Introduction

The Ischnocolinae are one of ten subfamilies currently included in the tarantula family Theraphosidae. Representatives of Ischnocolinae occur in the Neotropics, Mediterranean region of Europe and Asia, Africa and India. Since its establishment, the Ischnocolinae has largely been ignored, having long been considered a problematic group (viz., Pocock 1897; Simon 1903; Gerschman de Pikelin & Schiapelli 1973; Raven 1985; Smith 1990; Rudloff 1996). Few revisionary studies concerning Ischnocolinae genera have been undertaken: Gerschman de Pikelin and Schiapelli (1973) carried out a revision of the subfamily at a generic level, but several genera included at that time are no longer included in the Ischnocolinae; Rudloff (1997) published a revision of the genus *Holothele* but did not include all species and the generic diagnosis provided was not consistent. In that study, Rudloff removed the ischnocoline genera *Hemiergus* Simon 1903 and *Schismatothele* Karsch 1879 from the synonymy of *Holothele* Karsch 1879. Smith (1990) compiled data regarding African representatives of Ischnocolinae, gathering important information on the known species and describing several new species. However, a full taxonomic revision was not undertaken.

*Chaetopelma* was originally described as a sub-genus of *Ischnocolus* by Ausserer (1871). *Ischnocolus* was then characterised by the possession of divided tarsal scopulae—a character particularly obvious on tarsi III and IV (Ausserer 1871). The two sub-genera were distinguished by the foveal shape: deep, wide and recurved in *Chaetopelma* but procurved or straight in *Ischnocolus*. Simon (1892) subsequently established three groups based on the number of tarsi with divided scopula: Ischnocolae (all tarsal scopulae divided), Chaetopelmateae (tarsal scopulae III and IV divided) and Crypsidromeae (only tarsal scopula IV divided).