



The genus *Orobothriurus* Maury in central Argentina with description of a new species from El Nevado mountain chain in Mendoza Province (Scorpiones: Bothriuridae)

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Abstract

New data on the scorpion genus *Orobothriurus* Maury 1976 in central Argentina are provided. *Orobothriurus grismadoi* n. sp. is described; this species occurs in high altitudes in El Nevado mountain chain, an isolated orographic system in Southern Mendoza, Argentina, separated by almost 200 km from the Andes Mountain chain. This species is closely related to *Orobothriurus alticola* (Pocock, 1899). This is the southernmost record for the genus about 300 km south from previous records. *Orobothriurus bivittatus* (Thorell, 1877) is synonymised with *O. alticola* based on material recently collected in El Tontal mountain chain. We also provide new data about the distribution and intraspecific variability of *O. alticola*.

Key words: Scorpiones, *Orobothriurus*, new species, El Nevado, Argentina

Introduction

Most species of the genus *Orobothriurus* Maury 1976 occur at high altitudes above 2500 m. a.s.l. (Acosta 2005; Acosta & Ochoa 2000, 2001; Maury 1976; Ochoa 2004; Ochoa & Acosta 2002, 2003; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2005). However, some species have also been collected in areas of the Lomas biotope in the coastal Pacific desert of northern Chile and southern Peru (Ochoa & Acosta 2002; Ochoa 2004; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2003a). Most high altitude species are found in the Andes mountain chain, but some species appear to be endemic of other orographic systems east of the Andes in western Argentina like El Tontal (Acosta 2005) and Famatina (Acosta & Ochoa 2001).

The knowledge about the diversity of genus *Orobothriurus* in Argentina (as in the rest of the countries where it is distributed) is still scarce due to the rigorous environment where it inhabits. Most records belong to short campaigns to restricted areas, so that the actual diversity and distribution of the species of this genus is still not known. Up to now, only three species of *Orobothriurus* have been described for Argentina: *Orobothriurus alticola* (Pocock 1899), from the Andes of central Mendoza and San Juan Provinces (Ojanguren Affilastro 2005), *Orobothriurus bivittatus* (Thorell 1877), from the Tontal mountain chain in the Precordillera of San Juan province (Acosta 2005), and *Orobothriurus famatina* Acosta & Ochoa 2001, from the Famatina Mountain Chain in the Precordillera of La Rioja province (Acosta & Ochoa 2001). There are also other records of several undescribed species from central and northern Argentina (Ojanguren Affilastro 2005, Acosta & Ochoa 2001), but most of them comprise small numbers of specimens making impossible an accurate description of them (Acosta & Ochoa 2001).