



A redefinition of *Iranothyas* Bader, 1984 with the description of a new species from Oman

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Abstract

From a reinvestigation of the holotype of *Iranothyas circularis* (Schwoerbel & Sepasgozarian, 1976) results that this species was based on a female, not a male, as stated in the original description. The genus *Iranothyas* Bader, 1984, is redefined and *Balaneothyas* Gerecke, 1999 (monotypic, type species: *B. marismortui* Gerecke, 1999 from Israel) is recognized as its junior synonym. Bader's (1984) proposal to attribute *Panisopsis orientalis* Imamura & Mitchell, 1967 to *Iranothyas* is refused. A new, third species of *Iranothyas*, *I. alhajarica* n. sp., is described from Oman.

Key words: *Iranothyas*, *Balaneothyas*, new species, Oman

Introduction

Bader (1984) introduced the genus name *Iranothyas* after an investigation on the holotype of *Panisopsis circularis* Schwoerbel & Sepasgozarian, 1976. In his view, the genus was defined by: (1) a frontal plate formed by fusion of frontalia and postocularia, including a pigmented frontal eye; (2) plates dc-2-4 (Bader: "dc-1-3") distinctly larger than lateral eye capsules. A re-investigation of the type preparation showed that two important details escaped both to the authors of the species and to the author of the genus: (1) The acetabula neither lie free in the integument between gonopore and genital flaps, as would be expected in a species attributed to the genus *Panisopsis*, nor they are included into the genital plates (as suggested by the figures published in the original description and in Bader's revisional paper). Instead, they show an arrangement with Ac-1 and -2 lying free in the integument flanking the gonopore, but Ac-3 completely integrated into the posterior genital flap margin. (2) Absence of an ejaculatory complex and a pregenital sclerite generally found in males of eothyadine mites demonstrates that the specimen is a female. Among eothyadine hydrophants, fusion of Ac-3 with genital flaps is reported for species of *Todothyas* (subgenus *Acerbitas*), *Euthyas*, *Ignacarus* and *Balaneothyas*. The fact that *Todothyas*-, *Euthyas*- and *Ignacarus*- species differ strongly from *Iranothyas*, and from each other, in organization of the dorsal idiosoma and shape of genital field, members of the former two genera also in mouth part morphology, demonstrates that fusion of Ac-3 with genital flaps developed several times independently in eothyadine mites. Instead, the female of *Balaneothyas marismortui* Gerecke, 1999 agrees with the holotype of *Iranothyas circularis* from most points of view, also concerning the shape of the genital field. The strong similarity underlines our interpretation that also the type specimen of *I. circularis* is a female, not a male.

Consequently, we synonymize *Balaneothyas* with *Iranothyas*, and give a new diagnosis of the genus. Moreover, we describe a third *Iranothyas* species, collected by the junior author in Oman. In view of the