



Eight new spider species of the genus *Pholcus* (Araneae, Pholcidae) from China

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Abstract

A total of twelve species of the genus *Pholcus* from China are reported, eight of which are new to science as follows: *Pholcus babao* sp. nov., *P. chicheng* sp. nov., *P. datan* sp. nov., *P. exilis* sp. nov., *P. jinniu* sp. nov., *P. jiulong* sp. nov., *P. luding* sp. nov. and *P. wuling* sp. nov. All new species are diagnosed, described and illustrated. The other four known species, *P. clavatus* Schenkel, 1936, *P. kangding* Zhang & Zhu, 2009, *P. parayichengicus* Zhang & Zhu, 2009 and *P. qinghaiensis* Song & Zhu, 1999 are also illustrated.

Key words: Taxonomy, genitalia, type specimen, cave, fauna

Introduction

Pholcus is a genus of pale, elongate spiders with thin, extremely elongated legs. The characters most useful in distinguishing *Pholcus* from other genera are the projections of the bulb, traditionally called the unculus, the appendix and the embolus. Other characters are the conservative male chelicerae (a pair of dark frontal apophyses and a pair of light lateral apophyses), the shape of the procurus (usually with ventral boss), and the knob or worm-shaped apophysis on the often roughly triangular or oval epigynum (Huber 2001).

With currently 146 nominal species mainly distributed in Pan-Pacific region and Africa, *Pholcus* is the largest pholcid genus (Platnick 2009). Recently, 20 new species were described by Zhang & Zhu (2009) in China thus giving China 55 valid species (Zhang & Zhu 2009; Tong & Li 2009).

Evidence suggests that the biodiversity of Chinese *Pholcus* is poorly known. For example, among all 55 valid Chinese species, eight species are endemic to Hebei (including Beijing and Tianjin) as follows: *P. alloctospilus* Zhu & Gong, 1991, *P. beijingensis* Zhu & Song, 1999, *P. bessus* Zhu & Gong, 1991, *P. jixianensis* Zhu & Yu, 1983, *P. oculosus* Zhang & Zhang, 2000, *P. pennatus* Zhang *et al.*, 2005, *P. triangulatus* Zhang & Zhang, 2000 and *P. zhuolu* Zhang & Zhu, 2009. Herein, we describe another 6 new species from Hebei, as follows: *P. babao* sp. nov., *P. chicheng* sp. nov., *P. datan* sp. nov., *P. jinniu* sp. nov., *P. exilis* sp. nov. and *P. wuling* sp. nov. Hebei is located in the northern part of the North China Plain and the total area of this region (including Beijing and Tianjin) is 217,800 square km, about 2.27% of China (Song *et al.* 2001). These observations suggest that only a small fraction of the Chinese species of *Pholcus* has been discovered.

Material and methods

Taxonomic descriptions and terminology partly follow Huber (2000) and Dimitrov & Ribera (2007). All measurements given in the text are in millimeters. Specimens were examined using an Olympus SZX12 stereomicroscope. Further details were studied under an Olympus BX51 compound microscope. All illustrations were made using a drawing tube and inked on ink jet plotter paper. Photos were made with an Olympus C7070 wide zoom digital camera (7.1 megapixels) mounted on an Olympus SZX12 dissecting