



## A new *Bothriurus* (Scorpiones, Bothriuridae) from the Somuncura Plateau, with additions to the knowledge to the endemic scorpion fauna of the area

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### Abstract

*Bothriurus nendai* n. sp. is described. This species is endemic to the upper level of the Somuncura plateau, a Patagonian island placed in the Monte Phytogeographic province. This is the third known endemic scorpion from this area. *Bothriurus nendai* n. sp. is closely related to the *patagonicus* group; however, several morphological characters separate *B. nendai* from the species of this group. New data on the scorpion species of the plateau are also provided.

**Key words:** Scorpiones, Patagonia, Argentina, Somuncura, Bothriuridae, *Bothriurus*, endemism

### Introduction

The Patagonian scorpion fauna has received little attention by taxonomists until recent years; however, in the last decade several papers have been published on this subject (Acosta 2003; Mattoni 2007; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2001, 2003, 2007; Ojanguren-Affilastro & Cheli 2009; Ojanguren-Affilastro & Roig-Alsina 2001). Most of the scorpions of this area belong to genus *Bothriurus* Peters 1861, with five described species: *B. burmeisteri* Kraepelin 1894, belonging to the *burmeisteri* group; *B. patagonicus* Maury 1969, *B. sanctaerucis* Mattoni 2007, and *B. ceii* Ojanguren-Affilastro 2007, belonging to the *patagonicus* group (Mattoni 2007; Maury 1969; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2007); and *B. huincul* Mattoni 2007 that has some morphological characters that place it in an intermediate position between the *patagonicus* and *vittatus* groups (Mattoni 2007). Species of the *patagonicus* group and *B. huincul* are restricted to the Patagonian phytogeographic province as defined by Cabrera and Willink (1980), whereas *B. burmeisteri* occurs in a wide area with different environments belonging to the Patagonian, Monte and Espinal phytogeographic provinces (Mattoni 2007; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2005).

The Somuncura plateau is a basaltic tableland, placed in an extended plain in north-eastern Argentinean Patagonia (fig. 22). The average altitude of this plateau is about 900 to 1400 m, with some internal hills that can reach up to 2000 m. The area that surrounds this tableland and the foothills of it (up to 900-1000 m) belongs to the Monte phytogeographic province (Cabrera and Willink 1980), occupied by the typical Monte scorpion species of northern Patagonia: *B. burmeisteri*, *Brachistosternus* (*Brachistosternus*) *angustimanus* Ojanguren Affilastro & Roig Alsina 2001, *Brachistosternus* (*Brachistosternus*) *alienus* Lönnberg 1898, and *Urophonius exochus* (Penther 1913) (Ojanguren Affilastro 2007; Ojanguren-Affilastro & Cheli 2009). On the other hand, the upper level of this formation (above 900-1000 m), has ecological characteristics of the Patagonian phytogeographic province (Acosta 2003; Cei 1969, 1986; Menni 2004; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2007), and its scorpion fauna is composed of endemic species closely related to the Patagonian scorpion fauna. Up to now there are only two described species of this area, *Bothriurus ceii* belonging to the *patagonicus* group, and *Urophonius somuncura* Acosta 2003, belonging to the *granulatus* group (Acosta 2003; Maury 1979; Ojanguren-Affilastro 2007).