



## A review of the milliped genus *Haplogonopus* with commentary on the so-called “Charactopygus-Bildung” modification of spirostreptid paraprocts (Diplopoda: Spirostreptidae)

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### Abstract

The status of the monotypic taxon *Haplogonopus* (Verhoeff, 1941), proposed for a disjunct Tanzanian spirostreptoid, is reviewed in light of two additional species, which despite different peripheral appearances, are referable to this genus on the basis of genitalic features. *Haplogonopus inflatannulus* Verhoeff is redescribed from topotypic material, the nominal species *Charactopygus jeanneli* (Brolemann, 1920) is relocated in *Haplogonopus* (**n. comb.**), and the **new species** *H. cingulatus* is described from the Rondo Plateau in southeastern Tanzania. A terminology for the modified paraproct structure (“Charactopygus-Bildung”) of spirostreptids is proposed.

**Key words:** Spirostreptidae, *Haplogonopinae*, *Haplogonopus*, paraprocts, Tanzania, Kenya

### Introduction

*Haplogonopus*, proposed by Verhoeff in 1941 to accommodate a single species from east central Tanzania, has spent the past six decades in the obscurity not uncommon for monotypic genera of tropical millipeds. As implied by the name, this nominal taxon was based largely upon the “simple” form of the gonotelopodite, by which Verhoeff was so impressed that he justified a new subfamily Haplogonopinae [*sic!*] with the statement “Ausgezeichnet vor allen anderen Spirostreptiden sowohl durch die völlig einfachen Exospermiten, welche weder tibiale noch tarsale Erweiterungen, noch Dornfortsätze besitzen.”

Subsequent references to *Haplogonopus* have been few and unsympathetic. Attems (1950: 186) considered it to be a synonym of *Eumekius*, without expressing an opinion on the status of the type species *H. inflatannulus*. Demange (1970: 381) provisionally admitted *Haplogonopus* to his category “Télopodite flagelliformes sans différenciations tibiotarsales”; he felt that the original description did not offer adequate information on which to make any judgement aside from disagreement with Attems’ placement under *Eumekius*. My “Classification” (1980: 93) listed the name provisionally, stating “Status of this genus and number of species uncertain” and, without comment, relegating the subfamily name to the limbo of synonymy under Spirostreptidae. Taking a more draconian stance, Krabbe (1982: 196) disposed of *Haplogonopus* as a junior synonym of her broadly-defined *Spirostreptus*.

Quite some years ago, it was my good fortune to receive a number of collections from the type locality of *H. inflatannulus*, thus having the opportunity to examine Verhoeff’s assertions about its taxonomic status. Despite concluding that the genus was defensible, and using the name in my discussion of millipeds in the “Eastern Arc” mountains of Tanzania (1993: 106), I failed to publish any explication of my views, and so *Haplogonopus* languished for an additional decade.

While any small contribution to the taxonomy of tropical millipeds needs no apology, a primary rationale for consideration of this genus is the position it assumes in the broader context of spirostreptid classification, namely, the primacy of telopodite structure over unusual peripheral features in framing generic definitions.

It is reminded that the genus called *Spirostreptus* as defined by Attems and Krabbe was extremely heterogeneous, and with the recent fixation of the name *Spirostreptus*, *sensu* Brandt, 1833, to the taxon previously known as