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Six new species of ptyctimous mites (Acari: Oribatida) from Madagascar

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ABSTRACT — Six new species of ptyctimous oribatid mites from Madagascar are described and illustrated: Oribotritia perpusilla n. sp. and Phthiracarus ranomafensis n. sp. from Ranomafana National Park; Euphthiracarus (Euphthiracarus) paranetron n. sp. and Atropacarus (Hoplophorella) parastenos n. sp. both from Montagne d’Ambre National Park; Phthiracarus paracrispus n. sp. from Ankafantsika National Park; Notophthiracarus medius n. sp. from Andasibe – Mantadia National Park. A comparison with the most closely related species is also presented.

KEYWORDS — Oribatid; ptyctimous mites; Euphthiracaroidea; Phthiracaroidea; new species; taxonomy; morphology; Madagascar

INTRODUCTION

Madagascar hosts some of the World’s most diverse, unusual, endemic fauna and flora. This unique biodiversity and high level of endemism seem to be related to long-term isolation from neighbouring continental landmasses and the highly diverse environment. This fourth largest island in the World is classified as one of the most important biodiversity hotspots (Myers et al. 2000).

Dr P. Bařáň (Brno, Czech Republic), in official co-operation with the University in Antananarivo (Antananarivo, Madagascar), organized the search for litter-inhabiting invertebrates, mainly different groups of insects, in the years 2010-2015 in various parts of Madagascar. Together with his collaborators Dr R. Raveloson, Dr E. M. Rabotoson and Dr L. S. Rahaniotrinaiaina, he collected large samples of litter invertebrates, which were kindly offered for our study. This contribution is partly a continuation of our study of ptyctimous mite fauna based on this material (Niedbała and Starý 2013; 2014a, b, c; 2015a, b, c).

Altogether another six new species of ptyctimous oribatid mites belonging to five genera and subgenera, Oribotritia Jacot, 1924 from the family Oribotritiidae Grandjean, 1954, Euphthiracarus Ewing, 1917 from the family Euphthiracaridae Jacot, 1930 and Phthiracarus Perty, 1841, Notophthiracarus Ramsay, 1966 and Atropacarus (Hoplophorella) sensu Niedbała, 1986 from the family Phthiracaridae Perty, 1841 were found in this rich material. Their descriptions are the subjects of this study.
MATERIALS AND METHODS

The soil samples were collected by using a leaf litter sifting method and were extracted using a Winkler apparatus. All of the extracted mite specimens were preserved in 85 % ethanol, then cleared on slides with 80 % lactic acid and mounted on temporary slides with glycerol. Observations, figures and measurements were made using a standard light microscope equipped with a drawing attachment. The determined materials were preserved in vials with 80 % ethanol. All measurements are given in micrometres. Specimens shorter than 600 µm are considered small, while longer than 1 mm are large. The term c1/c1-d1 indicates the ratio of length of setae c1 to the distance between setae c1-d1. The terminology is based on Niedbała (2000). The types are partly deposited at the Department of Animal Taxonomy and Ecology, Poznań, Poland (DATE) and partly at the Institute of Soil Biology BC ASCR, České Budějovice in the Czech Republic (ISB).

DESCRIPTION OF NEW SPECIES

Oribotritia perpusilla n. sp. (Figures 1)

Description


Medium-sized species; body colour pale yellow.

Prodorsum — with distinct, long and simple lateral carinae. Sensilli long, bent in proximal part, smooth. Other prodorsal setae short, interlamellar (in) and rostral (ro) setae erect, rough, lamellar setae (le) procumbent, smooth, exobothridial setae (ex) vestigial.

Notogaster — Notogastral setae short, c1/c1-d1=0.4, all notogastral setae strong, rough, except filiform setae c3 and pS5; setae c1 and c2 remote from anterior margin, setae c3 near the margin.

Ventral region — Setae h of subcapitular mentum shorter than distance between them. Anogenital cleft trv long. Nine pairs of genital and two pairs of equal aggenital setae present, genital setae g1-5 longer than setae g6-9. Anal plate without setae and three pairs of adanal setae present. Distance between adanal setae ad1 and ad2 slightly longer than between ad2 and ad3. Lyrifissures iad situated laterally between adanal setae ad2 and ad3.

Legs — Chaetome of legs without tarsi: I: 1-3-5(2)-5(1), II:1-4-3(1)-3(1), III: 3-2-3(1)-3(1), IV: 3-2-2(1)-3(1); all tarsi heterotridactylous.

Material examined — Holotype is deposited at DATE from locus typicus: Madagascar, Ranomafana National Park, Vatoharanana, 3. X. 2012, evergreen rain forest, latitude 21°16’42.2” S, longitude 47°26’18.2” E, altitude about 1000 m, sifted forest leaf litter, Winkler apparatus extraction, leg. L. S. Rahantiirinaaina.

Etymology — The name of the new species perpusilla is Latin for "very small" and alludes to the small size of body in comparison with congeners.

Comparison — The new species differs from its congeners by the small size, the long, simple lateral carinae of the prodorsum and long, bent sensilli, absence of anal setae and presence of three pairs of adanal setae.

Euphthiracarus (Euphthiracarus) paranetron n. sp. (Figures 2)

Description

Measurements of holotype — Prodorsum: length 218, width 149, height 94; prodorsal setae: sensillus (ss) 68, interlamellar (in) and rostral (ro) 91, lamellar (le) 76, exobothridial (ex) 29; notogaster: length 414, width 262, height 257; notogastral setae: c1 56, c1/c1-d1=0.5, h1 and pS1 53; genitoaggenital region 132 × 53; anoanal region 202 × 43.


Prodorsum — with two pairs of parallel lateral carinae. Sensilli (ss) rather long, with elongated, rough, spindle-shaped head. Prodorsal setae long, erect, attenuate; relative lengths of prodorsal setae in=ro>le>ss>ex.
Figure 1: Oribotritia perpusilla n. sp. (holotype): A – prodorsum, dorsal view; B – prodorsum, lateral view; C – opisthosoma, lateral view; D – mentum of subcapitulum; E – right side of ventral plates; F - trochanter and femur of leg I.
FIGURE 2: *Euphitiracarus paranetron* n. sp. (holotype): A – prodorsum, dorsal view; B – prodorsum, lateral view; C – opisthosoma, lateral view; D – mentum of subcapitulum; E – ventral side.
Phthiracarus paracrispus n. sp.
(Figures 3)

Description

Measurements of holotype — Prodorsum: length 283, width 202, height 101; prodorsal setae: sensillus (ss) 66, interlamellar (in) 126, lamellar (le) 101, rostral (ro) 68, exobothridial (ex) 58; notogaster: length 581, width 379, height 328; notogastral setae: c1 152, c1/c1-d1 = 1:1, h1 and ps1 94.

Species of medium size; colour greyish.

Prodorsum — with median and lateral fields distinct long and narrow. Lateral carinae long, exceeds the sinus. Posterior furrows not visible. Sensilli (ss) long, thin, smooth, enlarged in their proximal third and ending in a point. Interlamellar (in) and lamellar (le) setae fine, smooth, semi-erect; rostral setae (ro) curved and directed downwards; exobothridial setae (ex) rather long, almost as long as ss and ro; relative length of prodorsal setae in = le/ro = ss>ex.

Notogaster — with fine, rather long notogastral setae (c1>c1-d1); setae c1 and c3 slightly remote from anterior notogastral margin, setae c2 far from the margin. Vestigial notogastral setae f1 located posteriorly of h1 setae; two pairs of lyrifissures ia and im present.

Ventral region — Setae h of subcapitular mentum shorter than distance between them. Nine pairs of genital setae with formula 8: 1, two pairs of rather long aggenital setae. Anal setae an1 and an2 shorter, slender and thinner than adanal setae ad1 and ad2. Lyrifissures iad situated between adanal setae ad2 and anal setae an2.


Material examined — Holotype is deposited at DATE from locus typicus: North Madagascar, Montagne d’Ambre National Park, circuit Ampijoroana, 7. I. 2015, evergreen rain forest, latitude 23°12’28” S, longitude 49°09’52” E, altitude 950 m, sifted forest litter sample under Pandanus sp. tree, Winkler apparatus extraction, leg. P. Baňař and E. M. Rabotoson.

Etymology — The prefix para is Latin meaning “near” and refers to the similarity of the new species with the species Euphthiracarus netron Niedbala et Starý, 2014.

Comparison — The new species is distinguishable from the similar E. netron Niedbala et Starý, 2014 by the reticulation of body surface (versus punctuation of surface), presence of two pairs of lateral carinae of prodorsum (versus one pair), slightly different shape of sensilli, with head like elongated spindle (versus short spindle), longer exobothridial setae ex, longer than distance between setae le and ro (versus shorter than le-ro), longer setae h of mentum than distance between them (versus setae h shorter). Arrangement of genital setae: 8: 1 (versus arrangement 7: 2) (Niedbala and Starý 2014b).
**Figure 3:** *Phthiracarus paracrispus* n. sp. (holotype): A – prodorsum, dorsal view; B – prodorsum, lateral view; C – opisthosoma, lateral view; D – mentum of subcapitulum; E – anoadanal plates; F – trochanter and femur of leg I.
slightly remote from margin); vestigial notogastral setae \( i \) located posterior of \( h_1 \) (versus anterior of \( h_1 \)); setae \( h \) of subcapitular mentum shorter than distance between them (versus, longer of distance); formula of genital setae 7(4+3): 2, versus: 7(4+2): 3; adanal setae \( a_d_2 \) minute (versus \( a_d_2 \) rather long, similar in the length to other adanal setae); chaetome of legs complete (versus chaetome of legs incomplete) (Hammer 1972).

**Phthiracarus ranomafanensis** n. sp.  
(Figures 4)

**Description**

Measurements of holotype: Prodorsum: length 364, width 273, height 136; prodorsal setae: sensillus (ss) 45, interlamellar (in) 94, lamellar (le) 53, rostral (ro) 76, exobothridial (ex) 43; notogaster: length 515, width 454, height 485; notogastral setae: c1 61, c1/c1-d1=0.4, \( h_1 \) and ps5 30; genitoaggenital plate 151 \( \times \) 126, anoadanal plate 227 \( \times \) 111.

Medium-sized species; colour light brown.

Prodorsum — with distinct sigillar fields. Lateral carinae absent. Sensilli (ss) short, club-shaped with rounded head. Other prodorsal setae fine, attenuate, in>ro>le>ex, rostral setae (ro) procumbent.

Notogaster — with 15 pairs of fine, attenuate and very short notogastral setae, setae c1 shorter than half of distance between setae c1-d1. Setae c1 and c2 remote from anterior margin of notogaster, setae c3 situated near this margin. Vestigial setae \( f_1 \) located anterior of \( h_1 \) setae (left side of holotype) or at the level of \( h_1 \) setae (right side of holotype). Four pairs of lyrifissures \( ia, im, ip \) and \( im \) present.

Ventral region — Setae \( h \) of subcapitular mentum slightly longer than distance between them. Formula of genital setae 4: 5. Anoadanal plates with 5 pairs of very short setae, adanal setae \( a_d_1 \) the longest. Adanal setae situated near paraxial border of plates, adanal setae \( a_d_1 \) at the level of anal setae \( a_n_1 \) and adanal setae \( a_d_2 \) at the level of anal setae \( a_n_2 \).

Legs — Chaetome of legs of "complete type"; setae \( d \) of femora I long, robust and slightly remote from distal end of article.

Material examined — Holotype is deposited at DATE from locus typicus: Madagaskar, Ranomafana National Park, 15. IV. 2011, secondary forest, latitude 21°13'03.6" S, longitude 47°22'02.9" E, altitude 1198 m, Amboditanimena village environs, sifted sample of forest litter, Winkler apparatus extraction, leg. P. Baňař and R. Raveloson.

**Etymology** — This new species is named after Ranomafana National Park.

Comparison — The new species has the arrangement of genital setae similar to that of some South African species of the genus *Phthiracarus* such as *P. densus* Niedbala, 2006, *P. endroedi* (Mahunka, 1984) (Niedbala 2006). It is easily distinguishable from its congeners by the unusual arrangement of adanal setae situated near paraxial borders, adanal setae \( a_d_1 \) and \( a_d_2 \) at the level of anal setae \( a_n_1 \) and \( a_n_2 \), very short and fine notogastral setae, and by the presence of four pairs of notogastral lyrifissures.

**Notophthiracarus medius** n. sp.  
(Figures 5)

**Description**

Measurements of holotype —Prodorsum: length 232, width 162, height 86; length of prodorsal setae: sensillus (ss) 114, interlamellar (in) 116, lamellar (le) 15, rostral (ro) 48, exobothridial (ex) 18; notogaster: length 460, width 323, height 288; notogastral setae: c1 109, c1/c1-d1=0.8, \( h_1 \) 106, ps5 96; genitoaggenital plate 114 \( \times \) 86, anoadanal plate 185 \( \times \) 96.


Species of medium size. Body colour brown.

Prodorsum — Surface of prodorsum reticulate but in posterior part with small irregular alveoles connected with weak lines. Lateral carinae distinct and long. Sigillar fields poorly marked, median longer than laterals. Sensilli (ss) long, bacilliform, without head, curved, covered with small spines, similar in shape to notogastral setae. Interlamellar setae (in) robust, erect, covered with distinct spines in distal half, similar to notogastral setae. Lamellar setae (le) thick, short, rostral setae (ro)
FIGURE 4: Phthiracarus ranomafanensis n. sp. (holotype): A – prodorsum, dorsal view; B – prodorsum, lateral view; C – opisthosoma, lateral view; D – left side of posterior part of notogaster; E – left genitoaggenital plate; F – right analanal plate; G – trochanter and femur of leg I.
Figure 5: Notophthiracarus medius n. sp. (holotype): A – prodorsum, dorsal view; B – fragment of surface of median part of prodorsum; C – fragment of surface of posterior part of prodorsum; D – prodorsum, lateral view; E – opisthosoma, lateral view; F – fragment of surface of notogaster; G – mentum of subcapitulum; H – left genitoaggenital plate; I – left anoanal plate; J – anterior part of paraxial margin of right genitoaggenital plate; K – trochanter and femur of leg I.
spiniform, rough; relative length of prodorsal setae: in>ss>ro>ex>le.

Notogaster — Surface of notogaster covered with small alveoles connected with weak lines, resembling reticulation. Notogastral setae robust, bacilliform of medium length (c1<c1−d1), their distal half covered with small spines. Notogastral setae c1 and c3 situated close to anterior margin of notogaster, setae c2 remote far from this margin. Vestigial notogastral setae f1 not visible, vestigial setae f2 and two pairs of lyrifissures ia and im present but hardly perceptible.

Ventral region — Setae h of subcapitular mentum shorter than distance between them. Surface of genitoaggenital and anoadanal plates reticulated. Formula of minute genital setae: 5: 4. Anoanal plates each with 5 pairs of setae, two pairs of anal setae shorter than distance between them. Surface hardly perceptible.

Ventral region — Setae h of subcapitular mentum shorter than distance between them. Surface of genitoaggenital and anoadanal plates reticulated. Formula of minute genital setae: 5: 4. Anoanal plates each with 5 pairs of setae, two pairs of anal setae thinner and three pairs of anal setae thicker, adanal setae ad1 and ad2 longest.

Legs — Setation of complete type. Setae d on femora I bifurcate and situated at distal end of article.

Material examined — Holotype is deposited at DATE from locus typicus: Central Madagascar, Andasibe – Mantadia National Park, Mantadia, circuit Rianasoa, path to Chute sacréé, 29. I. 2015, evergreen rain forest, latitude 18°50'07" S, longitude 48°26'22" E, altitude about 1000 m, sifted sample of leaf litter, Winkler apparatus extraction, leg. P. Baňař and E. M. Rabotoson, and one paratype is deposited at ISB from the same locality.

Etymology — The specific name of the new species medius is Latin for “intermediate”, “between” and refers to the similarity of the new species to two Notophthiracarus species N. lineatus Niedbała et Starý, 2015 and N. reticulatus Niedbała et Starý, 2014.

Comparison — The new species is similar to N. lineatus in the shape of the notogastral surface, which is covered by small foveolae connected with weak lines. It is also similar to N. reticulatus in the overall image of reticulation on the surface of notogaster. New species is distinguishable from N. lineatus by bacilliform shape of sensilli (versus dilated distally), longer adanal setae ad3 (versus minute adanal setae) and bifurcated setae d of femora I (versus not bifurcate). The new species is distinguishable from N. reticulatus also by bacilliform sensilli (versus dilated head of sensilli), erect interlamellar setae (in) and minute lamellar setae (le) shorter than rostral setae (ro), (versus almost procumbent interlamellar setae (in) and lamellar setae (le) longer than rostral (ro) ones, by setae h of mentum shorter than distance of their insertion points h<−h (versus longer setae that distance of their insertions, h>−h; by adanal setae ad2 of anoadanal plates, which are remote from paraxial margin of plates (versus location of adanal setae ad2 near paraxial margin). (Niedbała and Starý 2014c, 2015b).

**Atropacarus (Hoplophorella) parastesos n. sp.**

(Figures 6)

Description

Measurements of holotype — Prodorsum: length 190, width 139, height 71; length of prodorsal setae: sensillus (ss) 35, interlamellar (in) and exobothridial (ex) 18, lamellar (le)13, rostral (ro) 20; notogaster: length 374, width 227, height 222; length of notogastral setae: c1 71, c1/c1−d1=0.8, h1 94, ps1 83; genitoaggenital plate 114 × 71, anoadanal plate 104 × 63.

Species of rather small size; colour yellow; surface of body covered with deep rounded foveoles, in anterior part of notogaster with irregular margin.

Prodorsum — with small median crista. Lateral carinae short, posterior furrows distinct. Sigillar fields feeble, median ones narrow and longer than laterals. Sensilli (ss) rather short, with narrow pedicel and club-shaped, distally rounded head covered with small cilia. Other prodorsal setae minute, needleform, similar in length, ss>ro>in=ex>le.

Notogaster — with needleform, attenuate and smooth notogastral setae, most of them characteristically bent, medium in the length (c1<c1−d1); notogastral setae c1 and c3 slightly remote from anterior notogastral margin, setae c2 far from the margin. Vestigial setae and lyrifissures not visible.

Ventral region — Setae h of subcapitular mentum considerably longer than distance between them.
FIGURE 6: Atropacarus (Hplophorella) parastenos n. sp. (holotype): A – prodorsum, dorsal view; B – lateral view of body; C – seta c₁; D – mentum of subcapitulum; E – right genitoaggenital plate; F – left anoanal plate; G – trochanter and femur of leg I.
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Formula of minute genital setae: 6(4+2): 3. Anoadanal plates with minute, needleform setae similar in length; adanal setae ad3 situated in the middle of plates.

Legs — Formulæ of setae and solenidia of “complete type”; setae d on femora I needleform and situated at distal end of article.

Material examined — Holotype is deposited at DATE from locus typicus: North Madagascar, Montagne d’Ambre National Park, circuit Sommet, 12. I. 2015, evergreen rain forest, latitude 12°31’52” S, longitude 49°10’17” E, altitude 1169 m, sifted of Pan danus sp. litter sample, Winkler apparatus extraction, leg. P. Baňař and E. M. Rabotoson.

Etymology — The prefix para is Latin meaning “near” and refers to the similarity the new species with A.(H.) stenos Niedbała et Starý, 2014.

Comparison — The new species is slightly similar to A. (H.) stenos Niedbała et Starý, 2014 from Tanzania in the shape of the sensilli and shape and length of prodorsal, genital, anal and adanal setae. The new species is distinguishable from A. (H.) stenos by the absence of powerful median crista of prodorsum and anterior cowl of notogaster, curved notogastral setae, longer setae h of the mentum (versus shorter setae) and setae d of femora I situated at distal end of article (versus remote from distal end) (Niedbała and Starý 2014a).

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