

The presence of *Chaerilus chapmani* Vachon & Lourenço, 1985 (Scorpiones: Chaerilidae) on the Palawan island (Philippines)

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Abstract: Comparison of the topotype of *Chaerilus chapmani* from Sarawak (Malaysia) with specimens from Palawan island (Philippines) confirms the existence of two separate populations of this species.

Key words: Scorpiones, Chaerilidae, *Chaerilus chapmani*, Sarawak, Malaysia, Palawan, Philippines.

La presencia de *Chaerilus chapmani* Vachon & Lourenço, 1985 (Scorpiones: Chaerilidae) en la isla de Palawán (Filipinas)

Resumen: La comparación del topotipo de *Chaerilus chapmani* de Sarawak (Malasia) con especímenes de la isla de Palawán (Filipinas) confirma la existencia de dos poblaciones separadas de esta especie.

Palabras clave: Scorpiones, Chaerilidae, *Chaerilus chapmani*, Sarawak, Malasia, Palawán, Filipinas.

Introduction

When I began to study scorpions, I naively thought that all students do so strictly for the sake of advancing knowledge and are capable of objective discussions of taxonomic questions without resorting to personal attacks. Unfortunately, this conviction was quickly destroyed by W. Lourenço (see Lourenço, 2001 and most recently 2008). Instead of reacting to his derogatory remarks, I let the reader form an opinion. This short contribution is intended to show that *C. chapmani* does occur in the Philippines.

Chaerilus chapmani Vachon & Lourenço, 1985

Fig. 1–2.

Chaerilus chapmani Vachon & Lourenço, 1985: 10; Kovařík, 2000: 45; Lourenço, 2001: 174; Soleglad & Fet, 2003: 7; Santiago-Blay, Fet, Soleglad & Anderson, 2004: 4; Lourenço, 2008: 142.

MATERIAL EXAMINED. **Malaysia,** Sarawak, Gunong Mulu National Park, Clearwater III., Cave Gunong Api, V.1984, 1♀ (topotype), det. O. F. Francke, 1984, AMNH (American Museum of Natural History). **Philippines,** Palawan Island, St. Paul National Park, 2♀4juvs., II.1997, FKCP (the author's collection). All specimens were found under rocks in a cave.

DIAGNOSIS. Total length 30.9 – 39.2 mm. Movable finger of pedipalp with seven or eight cutting edges composed of granules. Fingers straight in both sexes. Trichobothria d2 and d3 on the internal surface. Tibia of pedipalp with eight keels of which only five are clearly discernible. Pectinal teeth number 3 – 4. For habitus and view of tibia, patella, and femur of pedipalp with position and distribution of trichobothria see Figs. 1 and 2 of this paper; figs. 1 – 16 in Vachon & Lourenço, 1985: 10 – 17; figs. 15 and 37 in Kovařík, 2000: 52 and 59. Carapace bears sparse granules of unequal size and longitudinal, symmetrical keels covered by large granules. Mesosoma sparsely covered by minute granules and without keels. Ventral side of mesosomal segments smooth, without keels. Keels of metasomal segments well defined and granulated, only ventral keels tend to be poorly developed and may be absent.

COMMENTS. *Chaerilus chapmani* was based on five specimens of both sexes (Vachon & Lourenço, 1985: 10), which I have not been able to examine because the paratype, allegedly at BMNH, could not be found and my loan request for MNHN types was denied. Subsequent to Lourenço's 2001 publication in which my conclusions were declared erroneous, Lorenzo Prendini informed me that one topotype was deposited at AMNH and available to me for study. Therefore, I am the only arachnologist who has seen representatives of both populations, and on that basis I can unequivocally state that they both belong to the same, morphologically quite homoge-

neous species. The Philippine specimens possess the same characters as the examined AMNH topotype and those given in the description of *C. chapmani* (see Vachon and Lourenço, 1985 and Kovařík, 2000), and the Philippine population cannot be treated as a new species on the geographic grounds alone. The Philippine specimens were examined by other arachnologists as well and without exception identified as *C. chapmani* (Soleglad & Fet, 2003: 7; Santiago-Blay, Fet, Soleglad & Anderson, 2004: 4). Lourenço (2008: 142), apart from doubting my ability to identify scorpions, argues that the specimens cannot belong to the same species because they are troglitic. I do not feel competent to assess the degree of adaptation of separate populations to cavernicolous habitats and do not think we have enough information on the bionomy of this species, however the presence of eyes and pigmentation suggest that it may not be fully adapted to life far inside a cave system. It apparently is to some extent troglitic, a facultative troglitic with median eyes but with the lateral eyes variously reduced. Specimens from the Palawan Island that I have seen all have two pairs of lateral eyes. Without pointlessly speculating, so much is clear that this species has at least two populations and that further occurrences are to be expected not only in caves proper but also around cave entrances and in associated resorptive collapse structures such as sinkholes.

Acknowledgments

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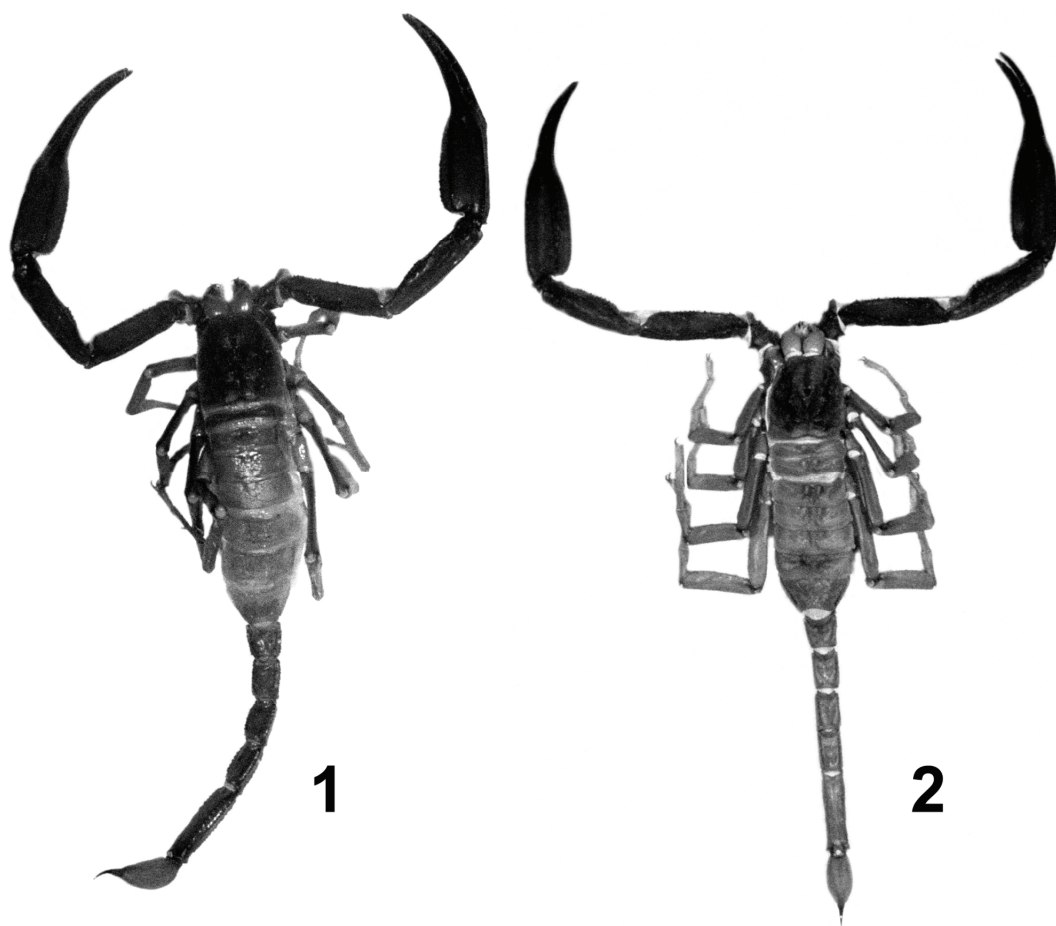


Fig. 1-2. Dorsal views of *Chaerilus chapmani* Vachon & Lourenço, 1985. **Fig. 1.** Female (topotype, conserved in alcohol) from Malaysia, Sarawak, Gunong Mulu National Park, Clearwater III., Cave Gunong Api. **Fig. 2.** Female (mounted dry) from Philippines, Palawan Island, St. Paul National Park.