

## Oribatid mites of the genera *Belba* and *Belbodamaeus* (Acari: Oribatida: Damaeidae) from Eastern Mongolia

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### Abstract

Two new species of oribatid mites belonging to the family Damaeidae, *Belba heterosetosa* sp. nov. and *Belbodamaeus rarituberculatus* sp. nov. are described from the eastern part of Mongolia. In addition, two known species, *Belba mongolica* and *B. crassisetosa*, previously known from central part of the country are discussed.

**Key words:** Acari, Oribatida, Damaeidae, new species, Mongolia

### Introduction

The oribatid mite family Damaeidae shows extensive taxonomic diversity in Mongolia, and the author described or recorded about a dozen species from central and northern parts of the country (Bayartogtokh 2000a, b, c, d, 2001).

The study of the oribatid mite biodiversity of Eastern Mongolia is subject of the ongoing research as part of the biodiversity assessments in various habitats of this region, and in the course of study about ten species of damaeid mites are found. The present paper deals with descriptions of two new species belonging to the genera *Belba* and *Belbodamaeus*, and supplementary descriptions of two known species of the former genus. The species of other genera will be discussed in a future paper.

The eastern part of Mongolia is occupied mostly by very large steppe landscape with short and tall grasses, which encompassing several national parks and nature reserves. For the better understanding of the ecological processes occurring within the protected areas it is important to examine the biodiversity and composition of various soil organisms living there. Among soil microarthropods, the oribatid mites are one of the numerically dominant groups, and their descriptions should facilitate further ecological and biogeographical studies on the oribatid fauna of this region.