



**Deletions from the North American harvestman (Opiliones) faunal list:  
*Phalangomma virginicum* Roewer, 1949 is a synonym of *Erebomaster weyerensis*  
(Packard, 1888) (Travunioidea: Cladonychiidae), and a note on “*Crosbycus*”  
*goodnightorum* Roewer, 1951 (Nemastomatidae)**

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The harvestman species *Phalangomma virginicum* was described by Roewer (1949) from Fountain Cave, Virginia, as a member of the family Phalangodidae. Since then, the species has been mentioned only twice, in catalogs (Rambla & Juberthie 1994; Kury 2003), and otherwise has been ignored for 60 years by North American biospeleologists and opilionologists alike.

Phalangodidae, once a dumping ground for a wide variety of laniatorid Opiliones, is now considered to be restricted to the north temperate zones of North America and Eurasia (Kury 2003; Giribet & Kury 2007). The most northeasterly occurring phalangodid species in North America is *Bishopella laciniosa* (Crosby & Bishop, 1924), which just crosses the Virginia/North Carolina border in the southwestern mountains of Virginia (unpublished records; species of *Phalangodes* occur in Kentucky further north, but much further west, than *Bishopella*). Fountain Cave (N38°15'21", W78°50'08" [Holsinger 1975]) is located in Augusta County, Virginia, about 160 straight-line miles (257 km) northeast of the most northeasterly record of *B. laciniosa*. Therefore, *Phalangomma virginicum* is evidently of biogeographic interest.

The description of *P. virginicum*, however, raises doubts as to its family affinities, since the characters of the species seem more like those of members of the family Cladonychiidae, quite distant from the phalangodids in recent phylogenetic and taxonomic schemes (summarized in Kury 2003 and Giribet & Kury 2007). In particular, species of the genus *Erebomaster* Cope, 1872 (Cladonychiidae) are known to be widespread in western and northern Virginia, with at least one species ranging as far north as Ulster County, New York (Bishop 1949). In preparation for future revisionary work on *Erebomaster*, I examined the type specimens of *P. virginicum*, kindly loaned by Peter Jäger of the Senckenberg Museum, Frankfurt.

The type series consists of four males and a single female. I compared these with specimens of *Erebomaster weyerensis* (Packard, 1888) from its type locality (“Weyer’s Cave,” now known as Grand Caverns). This locality is approximately 7 miles (11 km) from Fountain Cave. Not surprisingly, the types of *P. virginicum* are virtually identical to topotypical *E. weyerensis*, so the former species is here synonymized with the latter (**new subjective synonymy**). As the genus *Phalangomma* Roewer, 1949 is monotypic, *Phalangomma* becomes a junior subjective synonym of *Erebomaster* Packard, 1872 (**new synonymy**).

The distribution of species of *Erebomaster* is confused by evident misidentifications and the presence of undescribed species, as a reading of the listings in Kury’s 2003 catalog will show to anyone familiar with the low vagility of these animals and the geography of the Appalachian region. *Erebomaster flavescens* was described by Cope in 1872 from Wyandotte Cave in Indiana, and, in 1888, Packard described *weyerensis* as a subspecies. However, *weyerensis* is clearly a distinct species, found in caves in western Virginia (unpublished data), and is so treated here (**new status**). Records of *E. flavescens flavescens* from Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia (see Kury 2003) most likely refer to *E. weyerensis*.

Fountain Cave is also the type locality for “*Crosbycus*” *goodnightorum* Roewer, 1951. The genus *Crosbycus* Roewer, 1914 is now placed in the family Ceratolasmatidae. However, it is evident that the types of “*C.*” *goodnightorum*, like those of all the other species described by Roewer in his 1951 paper, were juvenile nemastomatines (Nemastomatidae) (Rambla 1968). No collector’s name or date was given, but the types of “*C.*” *goodnightorum* were very likely mislabeled, as this subfamily is not native to North America (Shear 1986). This name should be deleted from North American faunal lists; Cokendolpher & Lee (1993: 6) are incorrect in stating that I recorded it from West Virginia in 1974; my records were of *C. dasyncnemus* (Crosby, 1911) (Shear 1974). The identity of the name *goodnightorum* will

remain unclear, unless it can be established to which nemastomatine species the immature types belong, at which point the name would presumably become a synonym.

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