



A new species of *Ophionyssus* Mégnin (Acari: Mesostigmata: Macronyssidae) parasitic on *Lacerta schreiberi* Bedriaga (Reptilia: Lacertidae) from the Iberian Peninsula, and a world key to species

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Abstract

A new species, *Ophionyssus schreibericolus* Moraza **sp. nov.** is described, based on adult females, males and protonymphal instars. *Ophionyssus schreibericolus* parasitizes *Lacerta schreiberi*, a lizard endemic to the Iberian Peninsula, and known to have persisted in refugial populations throughout the Pleistocene. A key to adult females, males and protonymphs of the genus *Ophionyssus* is presented. *Ophionyssus viperae* Miron & Ivan 2003 is synonymised with *O. natricis* (new synonymy).

Key words: Acari, Macronyssidae, *Ophionyssus schreibericolus*, parasitic mites, Reptilia, Lacertidae, *Lacerta schreiberi*, Iberian Peninsula

Introduction

Among the 16 species of the genus *Ophionyssus* (Fain & Bannert, 2000; Hallan, 2005), only seven species have been found on lacertid lizards. The others are ectoparasites on different families of hosts (Fain & Bannert, 2000). The European species *O. lacertinus* (Berlese, 1892) parasitizes lizards in Great Britain, Netherlands and Italy (Fain & Bannert, 2000) and *O. sauracum* (Oudemans, 1901) is a common species in several European countries; three species belong to the Canary Islands fauna, *O. galloticolus* Fain & Banner, 2000 from Tenerife, *O. setosus* Fain & Banner, 2000 from Gran Canarias, and *O. dolatelacensis* Fain & Banner, 2002 from Lanzarote; *O. eremiadis* Naglov & Naglova, 1960 has been found in West Kazakhstan (Asia) and finally *O. tropidosaurae* (Till, 1957) is reported from South Africa.

The mites described in the present work were collected from *Lacerta schreiberi*, a lizard endemic to the Iberian Peninsula, ranging from the northwest and extending into the mountains of the Spanish Central System (SCS), with some isolated populations in the south. The host organism is thus part of the Iberian refugial fauna, which has remained on the Iberian Peninsula throughout the last glacial maximum, and further is thought to have persisted in geographically separated populations throughout the Pleistocene (Paulo *et al.*, 2001; Godinho *et al.*, 2008).