



Oribatid mites (Acari: Oribatida) of Ethiopia

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Abstract

In 2009–2010, a total of 99 species, 75 genera and 45 families of oribatid mites in Ethiopia were registered. Of these, 89 species, 55 genera and 26 families are first records for the country. The updated list of oribatids of Ethiopia includes 128 species, 94 genera and 55 families. An annotated checklist oribatid mite taxa of Ethiopia with known distributions is provided.

Key words: oribatid mites, fauna, checklist, Ethiopia

Introduction

The fauna of oribatid mites of the Ethiopia is poorly known. The first oribatid mite species, *Nothrus (Acronothrus) rothschildi*, was described from this area almost one century ago by Antonio Berlese (1916b). Subsequent studies appeared more than half a century later and were fragmentary: Aoki (1971) recorded two species; Mahunka (1982, 1983a, 1984) described 34 species; one species was described by Bernini (1988), and one by Niedbała (2008). Up to 2009, only 39 species from 39 genera and 29 families of oribatid mites were recorded from Ethiopia.

In 2009 and 2010 we studied oribatid mite material from about 20 liters of litter, moss and soil from two mountain forests in Southern Ethiopia, which yield not more than 2500 adult oribatid specimens. Our object in this paper is to list all oribatid mites taxa known from Ethiopia to date and overview their geographical distributions to provide a reference point for subsequent studies.

Some data have been published by us earlier (Ermilov, Sidorchuk & Rybalov 2010a–2010h, 2011a–2011d; Ermilov, Rybalov & Franke 2011; Ermilov, Rybalov & Kemal 2011a, 2011b; Niedbała & Ermilov 2011).

List of collecting sites

Et-1–7: 8°53'N, 38°09'E, 2900 m a.s.l., Cholomu forest (wood species, in particular, *Hagenia abissinica* and *Podocarpus* forming the canopy; undergrowth of ferns), in mosses on trees, 15.11.2009, coll. L.B. Rybalov.

Et-8–15: 8°53'N, 38°09'E, 2900 m a.s.l., Cholomu forest (wood species, in particular, *Hagenia abissinica* and *Podocarpus* forming the canopy; undergrowth of ferns), in litter and mosses, 15.11.2009, coll. L.B. Rybalov.

Et-16–19: 6°42'N, 39°43'E, 2249 m a.s.l., Bale Mountains National Park, Harena Forest (wood species *Hagenia abissinica* forming the canopy), in soil and mosses on trees, 23.11.2009, coll. L.B. Rybalov.

Et-20–21: 6°49'N, 39°49'E, Bale Mountains National Park, plateau Sanetti, Batu mountain peak, 4367 m a.s.l., on plants *Artemisia* spp. and *Oxytropis* spp., 23.11.2009, coll. L.B. Rybalov.

Et-22–24: 6°42'N, 39°43'E, 4050 m a.s.l., Bale Mountains National Park, plateau Sanetti, Afro-Alpine treeless communities, mosses and soil near a bog, 23.11.2009, coll. L.B. Rybalov.