

A SURVEY OF RUNNING CRAB SPIDERS PHILODROMIDAE (ARANEAE) OF ARMENIA

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ABSTRACT

Twelve species of philodromid crab or running crab spiders (Philodromidae) have been recorded in Armenia. Nine species are new to the spider fauna of this country: *Philodromus cespitum* (Walckenaer, 1802); *Philodromus emarginatus* (Schrank, 1803), *Philodromus rufus* Walckenaer, 1826; *Rhysodromus histrio* (Latreille, 1819), *Thanatus atratus* Simon, 1875; *Thanatus formicinus* (Clerck, 1757); *Thanatus imbecillus* L. Koch, 1878; *Thanatus vulgaris* Simon, 1870 and *Thanatus pictus* L. Koch, 1881.

Key words: Araneae, Armenia Caucasus Checklist, First records, Philodromidae.

INTRODUCTION

Spider fauna of Armenia remains poorly studied with about 190 species recorded to date (Otto, 2020). Koch (1878) and Kulczyński (1895) were the first authors who mentioned spiders from Armenia. Since then, the araneofauna of Armenia was represented by a few papers (Charitonov, 1936, 1956; Mcheidze, 1964, 1997; Ovtsharenko, 1982; Wesółowska, 1986; Eskov, 1987; Tanasevitch, 1987, 1990; Dunin, 1984, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992; Marusik, 1989; Mikhailov, 1986, 1987, 1990, 1992, 2003, 2013, 2016; Ovtsharenko *et al.*, 1994; Mikhailov and Propistsova, 2017; Mikhailov *et al.*, 2017; Mikhailov, 2021). Some important papers adding new data for Armenia were published by D. Logunov and colleagues (Logunov, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2015; Rakov and Logunov, 1997; Logunov and Marusik, 1999; Logunov and Guseinov, 2002, 2008) and the latest papers were contributed by the author (Zarikian, 2020; Zarikian and Kalashian, 2021)

Only eight species of Philodromidae have been recorded until this survey. Kulczyński was the first who recorded a few Philodromid species (Kulczyński, 1895), although many other arachnologists also contributed with studies on the Philodromidae of Armenia (e.g. Logunov and Guseinov, 2008; Mikhailov, 2000, 2013). However, compared with neighboring countries such as Turkey (38 species) (Danışman *et al.*, 2019), Iran (27 species) (Torabi *et al.*, 2019;

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Zamani *et al.*, 2019), Georgia (21 species) and Azerbaijan (30 species) (Otto, 2020), the lack of information on Armenian spiders difficult the analysis of the geographical distribution of many Caucasian species.

This work presents new faunistic records of Philodromidae spiders recently collected plus additional records from the NAS RA Scientific center of hydroecology and Zoology institute collections' unpublished material. The recorded species will help to clarify the distribution of nine newly reported species in Armenia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material considered in this work was collected from different provinces of Armenia (Tab. 1, Map 1) by Vladimir Zacharian and Arthur Sukiasyan (past researchers NAS RA scientific center of hydroecology and zoology Institute) during 1988-1991 and 2019-2020 by N. Zarijian Spiders were collected under stones, above ground, and on plants by hand picking and sweeping. The material was preserved in 70% ethanol and identified by the collectors based on Logunov and Guseinov (2008), Muster (2009), and Nentwig *et al.* (2020); The coordinates of occurrence sites are provided in Table (1).

In the list of species, the order of families and species follows Otto (2020), the general geographical distribution is provided according to the World Spider Catalog (2020), and the distribution throughout the Caucasus follows Otto (2020) and Nentwig *et al.* (2020). The data on habitats are based on the field experience of the collectors and do not refer to precise collection sites; however, they match the Armenian habitat at that time. The material is deposited in the NAS RA Scientific Center of Hydroecology and Zoology institute collection in Armenia. Photographs were taken using an MBC9 stereomicroscope and Samsung ES 95 Camera and prepared using Adobe Photoshope CC 2018 with hand-drawing additions.

Table (1): Collecting sites of specimens.

Site No.	Site name	Coordinates	Altitude (m.a.s.l.)
1	Ara ler (mount Ara)	40.40073°N, 44.46875°E	2200
2	Ejmiazin	40.16557°N, 44.29462°E	840
3	Geghadir	40.15466°N, 44.65141°E	1600
4	Gudemnis	38.93935°N, 46.177°E	1350
5	Hankavan	40.63611°N, 44.48749°E	1900
6	“Khosrov forest” State	Between 39.9700°N 44.8700°E and 39.9900°N 44.9000°E	1300–1460
7	Lehvaz	38.9389°N, 46.22369°E	1009
8	Marmashen	40.83486°N, 43.7779°E	1600
9	Meghri	38.9058°N 46.2540°E	1193
10	Noravank	39.6861°N, 45.22931°E	1400
11	Shvanidzor	38.90832°N, 46.38348°E	730
12	Yerevan	40.18469°N, 44.49591°E	980



Map (1): Collecting localities. 1. Ara ler (mount Ara), 2.Ejmiazin, 3.Geghadir, 4.Gudemnis, 5.Hankavan, 6.“Khosrov forest” State, 7.Lehvaz, 8.Marmashen, 9.Meghri, 10.Noravank, 11.Shvanidzor, 12.Yerevan. (from Worldometer <https://www.worldometers.info/maps/armenia-road-map>)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 32 specimens (30 ♀♀, 2 ♂♂) were collected encompassing 12 species and four genera as follows:

(1) Family, *Philodromidae*

Genus, *Philodromus* Walckenaer, 1826

Philodromus aureolus (Clerck, 1757)

Material examined: (7 specimens); Gudemnis, 13.vii.1989, 1 ♀; Shvanidzor, 02.vi.1989, 3 ♀♀; Yerevan, 09.vii.1988, 1 ♂; Hankavan, 14.vi.1990, 2 ♀♀.

Global distribution: Trans-Palaeartic and West Palaeartic Regions. In Armenia: unknown.

Distribution in Armenia: Dilijan, Tavush Province.

Habitat: Herb-rich places in woodlands.

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Philodromus cespitum (Walckenaer, 1802)

Material examined: (2 specimens); Lehvaz, 15.vi.1988, 2♀♀.

Global distribution: Circum-Holarctic Region and part of China.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Grasslands and deciduous trees.

Epigyne description: The overall shape of the epigyne is wide and the rounded upper part is offset against a wider middle and lower part. In the middle it is tongue-shaped and with sclerotized edges. The chitin bridge is visible at the top, so the EP-epigyne plate look like a cup (Pl. 1, A).

Philodromus emarginatus (Schrank, 1803)

Material examined: (2 specimens); Gudemnis, 13.vi.1989, 1♀; Yerevan, 23.vi.1991, 1♀.

Global distribution: Trans-Palaeartic Region.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Herb-rich places in steppe vegetation area and woodlands.

Epigyne description: The strongly sclerotized middle part is widened and sharpened in anterior here. The bridge-like chitin is hanging semi circularly (Pl.1-B).

Philodromus rufus Walckenaer, 1826

Material examined: (1 specimen); Meghri, 01.vi.1989, 1♀.

Global Distribution: Circum-Holarctic Region.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Forests and woodlands.

Epigyne description: The sclerotized middle part is curved and thin and in anterior part of the epigyne viewed spiraled, while posteriorly has slant broad cleft shape (Pl.1-C).

Genus, *Rhysodromus* Schick, 1965

Rhysodromus histrio (Latreille, 1819)

Material examined (2 specimens): Shvanidzor, 27.iv.1998, 2♀♀.

Global Distribution: Holarctic Region.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Dry regions.

Epigyne description: The epigyne wide at the base and posteriorly, narrow anteriorly. The anterior parts are closer, while the median part getting far to cohere to the base (Pl. 1-D).

Genus, *Thanatus* C.L. Koch, 1837

Thanatus atratus Simon, 1875

Material examined: (2 specimens); Ara Ler, 08.xi.2019, 2♀♀.

Global Distribution: Palearctic Region.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Semi-dry regions.

Epigyne description: The central part of the epigyne isn't depressed, no bridges viewed and the posterior parts look like clumps. No sclerotized part seems here (Pl.1-E).

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Thanatus formicinus (Clerck, 1757)

Material examined: (3 specimens); Geghadir, 30.x.2019, 3♀♀.

Global Distribution: Holarctic Region.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Dry and Semi-dry regions.

Epigyne description: The LP - lateral guide pocket is wide and sclerotized the anterior part is round-ended (Pl.1-F).

Thanatus imbecillus L. Koch, 1878

Material examined: (4 specimens); Ejmiazin, 16.iv.1989, 1♀; Shvanidzor, 02.vi.1989, 1♀, 1♂; Yerevan, 12.v.1989, 1♀.

Global Distribution: Bulgaria to Central Asia.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Dry and stony areas.

Pedipalp description: The tegular apophysis of the male palp is long and the tibial apophysis leaf-like and splinted at the end (Pl.1-G).

Thanatus oblongiusculus (Lucas, 1846)

Material examined: (1 specimen); Geghadir, 10.xi.2019, 1♀.

Global Distribution: Europe to Central Asia.

Distribution in Armenia: Unknown, this species was recorded by Mikhailov (2013).

Habitat: Stems, bushes and trees, sometimes also on herbs.

Thanatus pictus L. Koch, 1881

Material examined: (3 specimens); Ara Ler, 08.xi.2019, 3♀♀.

Global Distribution: Palearctic.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Dry regions.

Epigyne description: The LP - lateral guide pocket is narrow, but clear enough here; in anterior bents to form a corner (Pl.1-H).

Thanatus vulgaris Simon, 1870

Material examined: (2 specimens); Yerevan, 25.vi.1988, 2♀♀.

Global Distribution: Europe to Far East.

Distribution in Armenia: First record for Armenia.

Habitat: Dry regions.

Epigyne description: The epigyne of this species is similar to *T. atratus*, but the central part is more depressed, the sclerotized middle part is obvious and the anterior part is narrow (Pl.1-I).

Genus, *Tibellus* Simon, 1875

Tibellus oblongus (Walckenaer, 1802)

Material examined: Noravank, 13.vi.2020, 1♀; Khosrov, 22.vi.1990, 1♀, 1♂; Marmashen, 01.xii.2019, 1♀.

Global Distribution: Holarctic Region.

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Distribution in Armenia: Unknown, this species was recorded by Mikhailov (2013).

Habitat: Grasslands.

As a result of this study, nine species of spiders were recorded in Armenia for the first time (Plate 2), which morphometric measurements and characteristic features are not different from the European or Caucasus recorded specimen. We provided a comprehensive checklist of Philodromidae species, in which the currently known philodromid fauna of Armenia consists of 17 species. This enhances the regional catalogue of the Caucasian spider fauna. However, research on the arachnofauna of Armenia is still neglected. We hope this work will facilitate further research on arachnology in Armenia and could represent a baseline of biological data.

Checklist of Family Philodromidae in Armenia

Philodromus aureoles (Clerck, 1757)

Distribution in Armenia: Syunik, Kotayk, Yerevan and Tavush Provinces (Current study; Kulczynski, 1895).

Philodromus cespitum (Walckenaer, 1802)*

Distribution in Armenia: Syunik Province (Current study).

Philodromus collinus C. L. Koch, 1835

Distribution in Armenia: Tavush Province (Kulczynski, 1895).

Philodromus dispar Walckenaer, 1826

Distribution in Armenia: Tavush Province (Kulczynski, 1895; Mikhailov, 2013).

Philodromus emarginatus (Schrank, 1803) *

Distribution in Armenia: Yerevan and Syunik Provinces (Current study).

Philodromus juvencus Kulczyński, 1895

Distribution in Armenia: Kotayk Province (Kulczynski, 1895).

Philodromus rufus Walckenaer, 1826*

Distribution in Armenia: Syunik Province (Current study).

Rhysodromus histrio (Latreille, 1819)*

Distribution in Armenia: Syunik Province (Current study).

Rhysodromus lepidus (Blackwall, 1870)

Distribution in Armenia: Unavailable, this species was recorded in Armenia by Otto (2020).

Rhysodromus rikhteri (Logunov & Huseynov, 2008)

Distribution in Armenia: Yerevan Province, this species listed in Armenia by Logunov and Guseinov (2008).

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Thanatus atratus Simon, 1875*

Distribution in Armenia: Aragatsotn Province (Current study).

Thanatus formicinus (Clerck, 1757)*

Distribution in Armenia: Kotayk province (Current study).

Thanatus imbecillus L. Koch, 1878 *

Distribution in Armenia: Yerevan, Syunik and Armavir Provinces (Current study).

Thanatus oblongiusculus (Lucas, 1846)

Distribution in Armenia: Kotayk Province and Armenian upland (Current study; Mikhailov, 2013).

Thanatus pictus L. Koch, 1881*

Distribution in Armenia: Aragatsotn Province (Current study).

Thanatus vulgaris Simon, 1870*

Distribution in Armenia: Yerevan Province (Current study).

Tibellus oblongus (Walckenaer, 1802)

Distribution in Armenia: Unavailable.

Note: *First records in the fauna of Armenia are marked with an asterisk.

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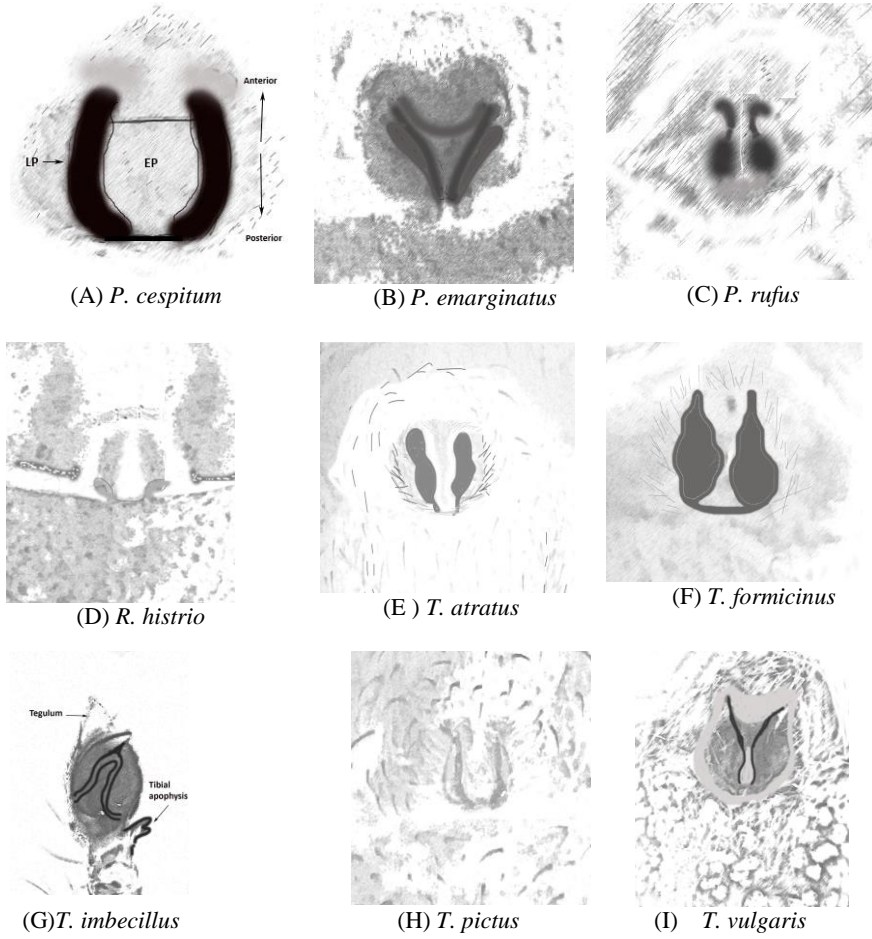


Plate (1): Epigynes (or pediapalp) of the species that recorded in current study.

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(A) *P. cespitum*



(B) *P. emarginatus*



(C) *P. rufus*



(D) *R. histrio*



(E) *T. atratus*



(F) *T. formicinus*



(G) *T. imbecillus*



(H) *T. pictus*



(I) *T. vulgaris*

Plate (2): The general view of described species of Philodromidae

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

"The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare".

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دراسة مسحية للعناكب السرطانية الجارية (Araneae) Philodromidae
في أرمينيا

نوشيك زاريكيان

المركز العلمي لعلم الحيوان و علم البيئة المائية، الأكاديمية الوطنية للعلوم في
جمهورية أرمينيا، يريفان، أرمينيا.

تاريخ الاستلام: 2021/08/30، تاريخ القبول: 2021/10/05، تاريخ النشر: 2021/12/20

الخلاصة

سجل خلال هذه الدراسة اثني عشر نوعًا من عناكب السرطانية الجارية (Philodromidae) في أرمينيا؛ تسعة أنواع منهم جديدة لمجموعة العناكب في هذا البلد:

Philodromus cespitum (Walckenaer, 1802)

Philodromus emarginatus (Schrank, 1803)

Philodromus rufus Walckenaer, 1826

Rhysodromus histrio (Latreille, 1819)

Thanatus atratus Simon, 1875

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