

SPARTAEINE SALTICIDS: A SUMMARY AND REQUEST FOR SPECIMENS

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I am working on the cladistic relationships within the jumping spider subfamily Spartaeinae, a group of salticids extensively revised by Fred R. Wanless of the British Museum in recent years in the course of a superb revisionary program of tropical Old World pluridentate taxa (Wanless 1978, 1979, 1981a, 1981b, 1984a, 1984b, 1987). The group occurs from southern Europe and Africa through Madagascar, south and southeast Asia, to Japan and Australia (Queensland) but is best represented in the tropics of Africa and Asia, especially in southeast Asia. As presently understood it includes thirteen genera and some sixty five species.

The characteristic features of the Spartaeinae may conveniently be indicated by reference to one of the best known species, *Portia fimbriata* (Doleschall) (figs. 1-6). Spartaeines are unusual among non-lyssomanine salticids in having relatively large posterior median eyes (PME) (fig. 1, arrow), though *Cyrba* and some species of *Gelotia* and *Taraxella* have the PME reduced as in most 'typical' salticids. Only two other groups of non-lyssomanine salticids are known to have larger than usual PME, the *Cocalodes-Allococalodes* group (Wanless 1982) and the *Holcolaetis-Sonoita* group (Wanless 1985), neither of which appears to be closely related to the spartaeines. The cheliceral dentition appears to be unique for the group and consists of several retromarginal and three promarginal teeth, with a distinct gap (diastema) between the apical and subapical promarginal teeth (fig. 2, arrow). Exceptions to this pattern are shown by *Spartaeus* and *Taraxella* which have four or more promarginal teeth with the apical not separated from the rest by a distinct diastema. Male spartaeines are distinguished by two palpal features, the tegular furrow (fig. 3, arrow) and the ventral tibial apophysis (fig. 4, arrow). The tegular furrow may be a crescentic pocket or a broad groove, as in *Portia*, *Cyrba*, *Brettus* and *Phaeacius*, or small and slit-like (e. g. *Spartaeus*). The ventral tibial apophysis characteristically presents a hook-shaped profile in lateral view. Recognition of female spartaeines is more difficult, though the relatively large PME and unique cheliceral dentition immediately identify the majority. Females of some species of *Taraxella* which have reduced PME would be very difficult to recognise in the absence of males, since the genus lacks the characteristic cheliceral dentition. In most the epigyne is well sclerotised and dark, with the posterior margin usually modified (fig. 5); the spermathecae in dorsal view are usually large, spherical-ovoid, and heavily pigmented (fig. 6).

One of the problems facing me is the very small number of specimens available for study; many species are known only from the holotypes. Much of the material is old and in poor condition and therefore of limited use in SEM studies. I would therefore be very glad to receive any specimens of this group on loan for study, or information on collections which I may be unaware of. Salticid workers sorting Old World tropical material in the course of their own studies are kindly requested, especially, to be on the look-out for these salticids. Any specimens or information on collections would be greatly appreciated.

SUMMARY

Characteristic features:

- (1) Relatively large posterior median eyes (pair of second row), but may be secondarily reduced.
- (2) Distinct regular furrow in male palp - a "U" shaped or crescentic groove on tegulum visible in ventral view of palp.
- (3) Well developed, usually hook-shaped, ventral tibial apophysis on male palp - best seen in lateral view
- (4) Chelicerae with three promarginal teeth (with apical and subapical more apart than others) and many retromarginal teeth (*Taraxella* and *Spartaeus* are exceptional in having more than three promarginal teeth).

General appearance: Very variable, some look like 'ordinary' salticids (e. g. *Cyrba*), while others may have conspicuous tufts of hair on carapace and abdomen, fringes of hair on legs, etc. (e. g. *Portia*) or may be rather large and flattened (e. g. *Phaeacius*).

Habitat/Behaviour: Very variable, some (e. g. *Cyrba*, *Spartaeus*) found on ground under stones, etc., some (e. g. *Brettus*, *Gelotia*) found on vegetation, others very cryptic and found on tree trunks or rock surfaces (e. g. *Phaeacius*) or mimic detritus and predate web-building spiders. Most are inhabitants of rain forest habitats.

List of genera:

Brettus – Madagascar, India – Sulawesi.

Cocalus – Sri Lanka – Australia.

Cyrba [= *Stasippus*, *Vindima*] – S. Europe & Africa – USSR & Australia.

Gelotia [= *Policha*, *Codeta*] – Sri Lanka-Sulawesi.

Meleon – Africa & Madagascar.

Mintonia – Malaya & Borneo.

Neobrettus – Bhutan – Malaya.

Phaeacius – Sri Lanka – Philippines.

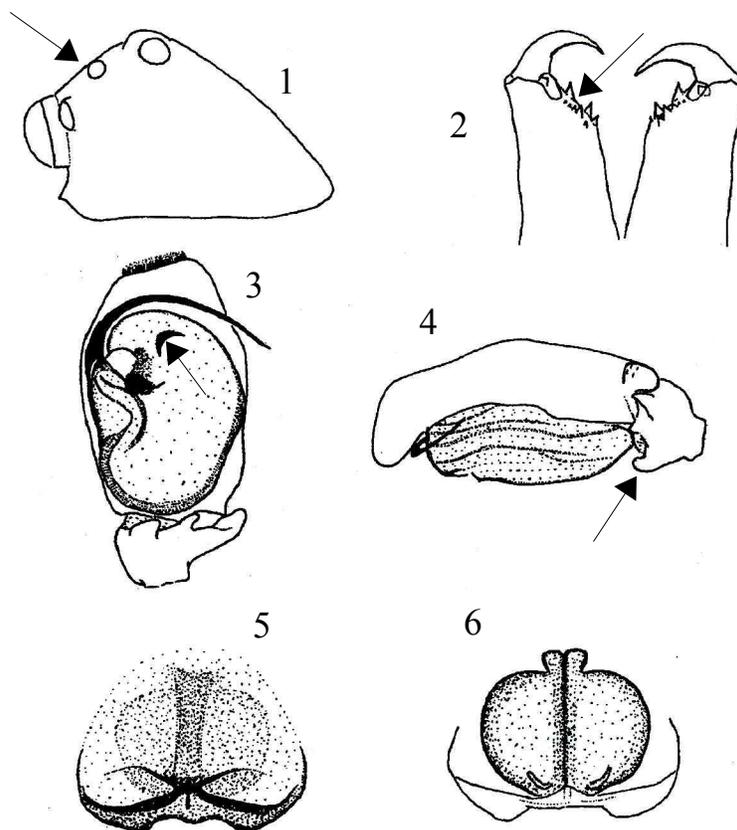
Portia [= *Sinis*, *Linus*, *Boethoportia*, *Neccocalus*] – Africa-Australia.

Spartaeus [= *Boethus*, *Nealces*, *Boethuola*] – Sri Lanka-Malaya.

Taraxella – Malaya, Sumatra & Borneo.

Veissella – Africa.

Yaginumanis – Japan.



Figs. 1-6. *Portia fimbriata* (Doleschall). Male (Morotai): 1. carapace, 2. chelicerae (posterior view), 3. palp (ventral view), 4. palp (retrolateral view); Female (New Guinea): 5. epigyne (ventral view), 6. vulva (dorsal view).

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