*Zootaxa* 1082: 37–44 (2005)
www.mapress.com/zootaxa/


ISSN 1175-5326 (print edition)
**ZOOTAXA**
ISSN 1175-5334 (online edition)

**1082**

# Scanning electron microscopy of *Chordodes moutoni* Camerano, 1895 (Gordiida, Nematomorpha)

FERNANDA ZANCA[1, 2] & CRISTINA DE VILLALOBOS [1, 3]

[1.] *Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y Museo. Paseo del Bosque S/N 1900 La Plata, Argentina.*
[2.] *Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET). fmzanca2002@fcnym.unlp.edu.ar*
[3.] *Comisión de Investigaciones Científicas (CIC). villalo@fcnym.unlp.edu.ar*

## Abstract

Taxonomic characters of both male and female horse-hair worms *Chordodes moutoni* Camerano, 1895 (Nematomorpha) are re-described using scanning electron microscopy. The features are compared with the original description. *C. moutoni* cuticle has five different areolar types in male while female have six types of areoles. The crowned areoles, characteristic of *Chordodes*, are surrounded by other areoles forming pairs or clusters. Sexual dimorphism was found in the cuticular pattern, the female showing two different types of crowned areoles with distinct distribution pattern while the male has only one type of crowned areoles. These data are compared to other *Chordodes* species that have been studied.

**Key words**: Gordiida, China, scanning electron microscopy, re-description

## Introduction

The genus *Chordodes* Creplin, 1874 is the largest genus of Nematomorpha with about 90 described species. The *Chordodes* species are distributed mainly in tropical and subtropical regions, with few exceptions (see Montgomery 1898, Kirjanova & Spiridonov 1989; Spiridonov 2000). The identification of a species of *Chordodes* is not easy because they have the highest diversity in cuticular structures (called areoles) among Nematomorpha. The diagnostic feature (and autapomorphy) (Schmidt-Rhaesa 2002a) of this genus is the presence of crowned areoles. The crowned areoles are a special type of areoles with one stem and a crown of apical filaments. Most of the original descriptions of *Chordodes* species were based on light microscopy (LM). These descriptions, in many cases, fail to give adequate diagnostic characters, leading to doubts on the real existence of some species. Therefore, detailed descriptions and reinvestigations with higher

*Accepted by B. Adams: 6 Oct. 2005; published: 18 Nov. 2005*