



A second species of the orb-weaving spider genus *Melychiopharis* from South America (Araneae: Araneidae)

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The genus *Melychiopharis* Simon was originally described in the family Araneidae, placed close to *Hypognatha* Guérin-Méneville (Simon 1895: 907). Levi (2002) transferred the genus to Theridiidae, based on its unusual morphology, which is extremely different from the araneid body plan. However, Santos *et al.* (2005) presented evidence suggesting that this genus is closer to araneid genera, like *Hypognatha* and *Testudinaria* Taczanowski and, consequently, transferred it back to Araneidae. That study also included a redescription and illustrations of the genus and of its only species, *M. cynips* Simon, 1895, which is currently known from northern, central and northeastern Brazil.

Recently, while sorting material collected in the south of the state of Bahia for the Masters thesis of the third author, we found male and female specimens that clearly represent a new species in this genus. This species is herein described and illustrated.

The type specimens were deposited in the collection of Arachnida of Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA, T.K. Brazil). Male and female specimens were examined and illustrated under a Leica MZ12.5 dissecting microscope with a camera lucida. Multifocal digital photography was made with a Nikon DXM1200 digital camera attached to a Leica DFC500 stereoscopic microscope, and compound images were assembled with Leica Applications Suite software. Female internal genitalia was examined and illustrated immersed in clove oil. Description format is the same as in other revisions of Neotropical araneid genera by H.W. Levi (see reference list in Levi 2002), and all measurements are in mm.

Family Araneidae Clerck, 1757

Genus *Melychiopharis* Simon, 1895

Melychiopharis Simon 1895: 907. Type species by monotypy, *M. cynips* Simon, 1895.

Diagnosis. This genus can be distinguished from other araneids by the long and granulated carapace in males and females (Figs. 1, 2; Santos *et al.* 2005: figs. 1–3). The male pedipalp is distinctive in the embolus arising from a large, rounded base and in the filiform, long and proximally directed median apophysis (Figs. 3, 4, 7, 8; Santos *et al.* 2005: figs. 6–8). Epigynum is relatively simple, with a rounded median plate and copulatory ducts laterally visible by transparency through the tegument (Figs. 5, 6, 9; Santos *et al.* 2005: fig. 9).

Melychiopharis bibendum new species

(Figures 1–10)

Type material: Male holotype and female paratype from Mata do Pacangê, Michelin's Legal Reserve, Ituberá (13°43'S 39°08'W), state of Bahia, Brazil, 15–25.I.2009, C.M.P. Leite coll., deposited in UFBA 2658 and 2659 respectively.

Etymology. The species name refers to the centenarian mascot of the Michelin Company, which maintains a private forest reserve in southern Bahia, where the type specimens were collected.