The Amazonian Goblin Spiders of the New Genus Gradunguloonops
(Araneae: Oonopidae)

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Magnolia Press
Auckland, New Zealand

Accepted by M. Arnedo: 9 Feb. 2015; published: 27 Mar. 2015
CRISTIAN J. GRISMADO, MATÍAS A. IZQUIERDO, MARÍA E. GONZÁLEZ MÁRQUEZ & MARTÍN J. RAMÍREZ
The Amazonian Goblin Spiders of the New Genus Gradunguloonops (Araneae: Oonopidae)
(Zootaxa 3939)
67 pp.; 30 cm.
27 Mar. 2015
ISBN 978-1-77557-669-3 (paperback)

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 2015 BY
Magnolia Press
P.O. Box 41-383
Auckland 1346
New Zealand
e-mail: zootaxa@mapress.com
http://www.mapress.com/zootaxa/

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ISSN 1175-5326 (Print edition)
ISSN 1175-5334 (Online edition)
Abstract

A new genus of soft-bodied oonopids, Gradunguloonops, is established for a group of goblin spiders found in the Amazonian rainforests of northern South America. Members of this genus differ from other oonopids in that the proclaw of tarsi I and II is notably larger than the corresponding retroclaw, a putative synapomorphy of the group. Gradunguloonops comprises twelve species, all new and described in this contribution: G. mutum (type species) from Brazil and Peru, G. bonaldoi, G. amazonicus, G. urucu, G. pacanari, G. juruti from Brazil, G. erwini from Peru, G. orellana and G. nadineae from Ecuador, G. benavidesae and G. florezi from Colombia, and G. raptor from Venezuela. Two preliminary intrageneric groups are proposed on the basis of their female genital morphology: the bonaldoi group, to which are assigned the species with the anterior section comprising only a single anterior sclerite, and the mutum group, with a more complex, tripartite anterior section.

Key words: Neotropical region, new species, taxonomy, genital morphology

Introduction

The family Oonopidae (goblin spiders) currently includes 1518 species and 103 genera (World Spider Catalog 2014) and continues to grow fast, mainly as a result of revisionary studies carried out by the Planetary Biodiversity Inventory (PBI) project (www.research.amnh.org/oonopidae). It is well known that these very small, six-eyed, haplogyne spiders are most abundant and diverse in the tropics (Jocqué & Dippenaar 2006). Recent contributions have shown that the American fauna is among the most diverse and interesting; for example, the Dysderina complex constitutes over 270 species belonging to at least nine genera (World Spider Catalog 2014), while recent revisions of other hard-bodied oonopids (formerly “gamasomorphines”), such as Escaphiella Platnick & Dupérré, Scaphiella Simon, Pescennina Simon, Niarchos Platnick & Dupérré, Stenoonops Simon, Scaphioides Bryant, Varoonops Bolzern & Platnick, Simlops Bonaldo, Ott & Ruiz, and Reductoonops Platnick & Berniker, have resulted in more than 250 described species, most of them newly described.

Despite the spectacular progresses in the oonopid systematics, the research effort is still unbalanced considering differing lineages within the family. The soft-bodied oonopids (formerly “oonopines”) in particular have received less attention. The most diverse genus of this group is probably Neotrops Grismado & Ramirez, with
bulb, with a clearly defined seam between; bulb yellow, 1 to 1.5 times as long as cymbium, stout, middle part bent dorsally after a constriction, distal part with conductor on the prolateral side, as a curved, strong, dark spiniform projection, embolus curved distally, with an acute dorsal terminal projection and accompanied prolaterally by a scaly curved lobe.

Female unknown.

**OTHER MATERIAL EXAMINED:** None.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Known only from the type locality in Mérida (Venezuela).

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We are indebted to the curators of collections that have supplied specimens: Norman Platnick and Lou Sorkin (AMNH), Eduardo Flórez-Daza (ICN), Cristina Scioscia (MACN-Ar), Alexandre Bonaldo (MPEG), Diana Silva Dávila (MUSM), Jonathan Coddington (USNM), and Laura Leibensperger (MCZ). To Wouter Fannes, one anonymous reviewer, and the editor, Miquel Arnedo, for their critical comments on the manuscript. CJG wishes to express special thanks to Alexandre Bonaldo and all the personnel of his lab for the hospitality and help during the visit to the MPEG in 2010, and also to Yulie Shimano for her help in solving problems with localities on labels. This study was financed in part by a grant from the U. S. National Science Foundation (grant no. 0613754 for the Planetary Biodiversity Inventory of the spider family Oonopidae), from FONCyT PICT-2011-1007 to MJR, and doctoral fellowships from CONICET to MEG and MAI.

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http://dx.doi.org/10.1206/690.1

http://dx.doi.org/10.1206/3736.2
