

**Revision of the genus *Chordodes* (Gordiida, Nematomorpha) from Africa. II. Ultrastructural redescription of *C. africanus* Sciacchitano, 1933, *C. hawkeri* Camerano 1902; *C. sandoensis*, Sciacchitano 1937; *C. schoutedeni*, Sciacchitano 1933 and reinterpretation of *Chordodes butensis* Sciacchitano, 1937**

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**Abstract**

We reinvestigate five African species of the genus *Chordodes* in order to certify the taxonomic descriptions and verify the species status. By scanning electron microscopy, we demonstrate characteristic cuticular patterns for the species *Chordodes africanus*, *C. hawkeri*, *C. sandoensis* and *C. schoutedeni*. The fifth species, *C. butensis*, is synonymized with *C. africanus*, because no differences were detected.

**Key words:** Gordiida, Africa, scanning electron microscopy

**Introduction**

The genus *Chordodes* is the largest, according to species numbers, with approximately 90 species described to date (Schmidt-Rhaesa 2002). Almost all species were found in tropical and subtropical regions and the main hosts are praying mantids (Schmidt-Rhaesa & Ehrmann 2001). The cuticle of *Chordodes* is much more diverse than in the other nematomorph genera, it is structured by so-called areoles, which are differently structured elevations. Several types occurring abundantly in *Chordodes* species have been named, among them the so-called crowned areoles as the characteristic type for the genus