



A new genus, with a new species, from Brazil (Acari: Prostigmata: Cunaxidae)

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Abstract

A new cunaxid genus from Brazil, *Cunaxatricha* **gen. nov.**, is erected and its type species, *Cunaxatricha tarsospinosa* **sp. nov.** is described and figured. A key to the genera of the subfamily Cunaxinae, to which this new genus belongs, is provided.

Key words: Bdelloidea, Cunaxinae, predatory mite, identification key, taxonomy

Introduction

Members of Cunaxidae are all free-living and predacious, forming an integral part of soil, plant or stored food ecosystems (Meyer & Ryke 1959, Muma 1960, Gerson *et al.* 2003). They prey mostly on nematodes and small arthropods, mainly mites and Collembola; some species have also been observed feeding on fungi (Walter & Kaplan 1991). Three cunaxid species were previously reported from Brazil namely, *Cunaxa denmarki* Smiley, *Scutascirus braziliensis* Den Heyer and *Dactyloscirus bison* (Berlese). Faunistic studies of mites from Brazilian natural ecosystems (Arruda Filho & Moraes 2002, Zacarias & Moraes 2002, Castro & Moraes 2007) and from plants of agricultural importance (Ferla & Moraes 1998, Feres 2000, Feres *et al.* 2002, Ferla & Moraes 2002, Barbosa *et al.* 2005) reported the Cunaxidae only at generic level. One of these studies reported a considerable diversity of this predatory group in the Atlantic Forest, one of the most important natural ecosystems of Brazil (Castro & Moraes 2007). In a recent study of the mentioned Brazilian cunaxid fauna Den Heyer & Castro (2008a & b) revised the genus *Pseudobonzia* Smiley, divided it and described two new species of a new genus *Coleobonzia* Den Heyer & Castro; they also described three new species of *Neoscirula* Den Heyer. In this paper a new genus found from those natural ecosystems on different plant families of this ecosystems as well as from rubber tree plantations is described.

Material and methods

Mites were sampled from plants of the Atlantic Forest in Cananéia, Pariquera-Açu and Piracicaba in the State of São Paulo during the Biota project (97/7099-0), and from rubber tree, *Hevea brasiliensis* Muell. Arg., plantations in Piracicaba and Votuporanga in the State of São Paulo and in Selvíria in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul.