



## Two new chigger mites of the genus *Aboriginesia* (Acari: Trombiculidae)

JÁN KOVÁČIK<sup>1</sup> & STANISLAV KALÚZ<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Ninmica 172, 020 01 Slovak Republic*

<sup>2</sup>*Institute of Zoology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Dúbravská cesta 9, 845 06 Bratislava, Slovak Republic.*

*E-mail: stanislav.kaluz@savba.sk*

### Abstract

Two new chigger mites *Aboriginesia ludmilae* **sp. n.** and *Aboriginesia obuchi* **sp. n.** (Acari: Trombiculidae) are described from mountain areas of Switzerland and Caucasus.

**Key words:** chigger, larvae, mites, mountains, new species

### Introduction

The genus *Aboriginesia* Kudryashova was erected after the systematic study of the very similar genera *Hoffmannina* Brennan & Jones and *Heaslipia* Ewing. In particular, the revision of *Hoffmannina* resulted in the separation of the genus *Aboriginesia*, which includes the Palearctic chiggers previously placed into *Hoffmannina*. Fifteen species are described in *Aboriginesia*, some of which have an unclear taxonomic status (Kudryashova 1998; Stekolnikov 2001). The majority of known species come from submontane or montane localities from North Africa (Brown 2008) and Spain to Central Asia (Kudryashova 1998), occurring mainly in the territories surrounding the Black Sea. This paper presents descriptions of another two *Aboriginesia* chiggers from Switzerland and Caucasus.

### Material and methods

The mite material from Switzerland was collected more than 30 years ago (the years 1970–1975). The larvae from small mammals preserved in ethylalcohol were sent to Slovak acarologist Prof. Dr. Milan Mrciak. Part of the chigger material was mounted onto slides using Swann's medium and marked with only numbers from the original protocols and with the abbreviation of each area (CH – 1421, CH – 1433 for Switzerland) without any details on date of collection, locality, host, altitude and other important information. After the death of Prof. Mrciak in 1975 the material of parasites was divided and deposited in various places. Unfortunately, during these 30 years the majority of the protocols have been lost. Thus, more detailed data on the new chigger from Switzerland described in this paper are not available.

The material from Caucasus comes from the mountain pasture with an occurrence of solitary *Juniperus* sp., the chigger larvae were collected from the ears of *Chionomys gud* (Satunin). The hosts (26 individuals in total) were caught using the linear snap trap method, then preserved in ethylalcohol and identified by the Slovak osteologist J. Obuch both on the base of external morphological features and craniometric measurements.

The slide-mounted chigger specimens in very poor condition we decided to reassemble, save and describe these species, despite the missing data. The mites from Switzerland and Caucasus were remounted onto new slides using Swann's medium, then microscopically identified and described. The drawings were produced