



Notes on Burmese spiders formerly attributed to the genus *Storena* (Zodariidae, Araneae)

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Abstract

Studies on the spider fauna of Southeast Asia resulted in a review of five *Storena* species which were previously described from Burma. These species were misplaced in *Storena* Walckenaer, 1805, a zodariid genus that is endemic to Australia. Four species are here transferred to *Mallinella* Strand, 1906: *Mallinella suavis* (Thorell, 1895) comb. nov., *M. exornata* (Thorell, 1887) comb. nov., *M. fronto* (Thorell, 1887) comb. nov., and *M. decorata* (Thorell, 1885) comb. nov. *Mallinella irrorata* (Thorell, 1887) belongs to an undescribed genus of the subfamily Zodariinae. This study also gives a complete list of all *Storena* specimens examined and studied by Thorell which are now deposited in four European museums.

Key words: *Mallinella*, new status, conspecific sex, synonymy, taxonomy

Introduction

The early history of taxonomic work on the spiders of Burma is linked to expanding collections of the natural history museums in Europe and the impressive work of Professor T. Thorell who described over 300 Burmese species. Thorell had based his studies on two major collections: Museo Civico di Storia Naturale 'Giacomo Doria', Genoa, Italy (MSNG), and The Natural History Museum, London, UK (NHML).

The zoological collections of Genoa Museum are of exceptional value, containing type specimens of more than 11,000 species of vertebrates, mollusks, arachnids and insects (Capocaccia & Poggi 1982). This was primarily a result of numerous expeditions made by museum colleagues. The spider collection of Genoa Museum dates back to the 19th century. From 1881 to 1883 Captain G. B. Comotto, a Genoese who was then in service to a Burmese king, had continuously presented fishes, reptiles, insects, myriapods, and arachnids to the museum collections. Later Leonardo Fea, who was in Burma between 1885 and 1889, sent 80,000 specimens of animals (60,000 of which were insects) belonging to approximately 8,500 species (Gestro 1904). Fea collected throughout the length of Burma (despite numerous disruptions caused by the British invasion and later by Burmese rebellions), spending seven months in Bhamo in the Katchin mountains of the north, four months in the Tenassarim areas of the south, and more than a year in the hills of Carin (modern Karen) State. This material led to descriptions of 165 new genera and 2,150 new species (Fea 1896, 1897). Fea's collection was subsequently transferred to Thorell, and 124 spider species were described in his first work (Thorell 1887).

The collection made by Eugene W. Oates from a garden at Tharrawaddy train station (70 miles north of Rangoon) during 1884–1887 was also presented to Thorell who spent three years preparing a manuscript containing descriptions of 310 species, 153 of which were new to science (Thorell 1895). This material is deposited in the arachnid collection of NHML. However, Thorell was permitted by Oates to retain some of the specimens (Thorell 1895: v) and consequently 'not all the specimens of the species enumerated are preserved in the British Museum' (Thorell 1895: vi). Types of some species can also be found in Copenhagen and Stockholm. In 1897, Thorell published his second work from Fea's collection and also his last work on Burmese spiders, dealing with 64 species (Thorell 1897).