



Rediscovery of *Mantellias pubicornis* Westwood, 1889, a rare praying mantis from the Amazon (Mantodea, Thespidae, Oligonicinae)

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Many praying mantis species remain known from type specimens only. The majority of these taxa have vague taxonomic limits, as original descriptions are often very short, making strong emphasis on superficial characters (Rivera 2010). One clear example of this is the Amazonian *Mantellias* Westwood, 1889, a monotypical genus represented by *Mantellias pubicornis* Westwood, 1889.

Westwood (1889) described *M. pubicornis* presumably on the basis of specimens obtained in Brazil (Pará and Amazonas States). Westwood's original description emphasized male characters, briefly mentioned the alleged female, and included a few measurements of both sexes. The exact number of individuals in the type series was not indicated. He classified *Mantellias* within the "Miomantides", along with *Miopteryx* Saussure, 1869 and *Mantillica* Westwood, 1889. No type was designated. Since its original description, *M. pubicornis* has been cited only in catalogs, checklists and identification keys. Nevertheless, its systematic placement remains largely undefined, as all historical attempts to classify *Mantellias* were done on the basis of Westwood's vague description. The result is a confusing systematic scenario.

Kirby (1904) classified *Mantellias* within the Mantinae, whereas Giglio-Tos (1919, 1927) placed it within the Pseudomiopteryginae, along other Neotropical genera such as *Diabantia* Giglio-Tos, 1915, *Mantillica*, *Pseudomiopteryx* Saussure, 1870, *Anamiopteryx* Giglio-Tos, 1915, *Bantiella* Giglio-Tos, 1915 and *Miobantia* Giglio-Tos, 1917. Later on, Beier (1935) subdivided Thespinae into five tribes: Thespini, Oligonicini, Parathespini, Hoplocoryphini and Pseudomiopterygini, placing *Mantellias* within the latter. Beier's (1935) concept of Pseudomiopterygini also included Pseudomiopteryginae *sensu* Giglio-Tos (1919, 1927) in addition to *Eumiopteryx* Giglio-Tos, 1915, *Antimiopteryx* Giglio-Tos, 1915, *Promiopteryx* Giglio-Tos, 1915 and *Chloromiopteryx* Giglio-Tos, 1915. Beier maintained this same classification in later contributions (Beier 1964, 1968). More recently, Terra (1995) assigned *Mantellias* to Thespidae but considered it as *incertae sedis* within the family. Ehrmann (2002) assigned *Mantellias* to the Oligonicinae, specifically within the Pogonogasterini of Beier (1964), along with *Pogonogaster* Rehn, 1918, *Carrikerella* Hebard, 1922, *Liguanea* Rehn & Hebard, 1938, *Thesprotia* Stål, 1877, *Mantillica* and *Pseudopogonogaster* Beier, 1942. Agudelo *et al.* (2007), Ehrmann & Koçak (2009) and Rivera (2010) followed this latest arrangement.

After examining the type series of *M. pubicornis*, deposited at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUNHM), we are now in the position to assess its taxonomic status and systematic placement. We also take the opportunity to redefine this taxon and provide additional information on the type material.

Taxonomy

Mantellias Westwood, 1889

Type species: *Mantellias pubicornis* Westwood, 1889 (monotypy)

Westwood 1889:38 (Miomantides); Kirby 1904: 225 (Mantinae); Giglio-Tos 1919: 62 (Pseudomiopteryginae, Pseudomiopteriges); Giglio-Tos 1927: 257 (Pseudomiopteryginae, Pseudomiopteriges); Beier 1935: 5; 1964: 944; 1968: 8 (Thespinae, Pseudomiopterygini); Terra 1995: 51 (Thespidae, *incertae sedis*); Cerdá 1996: 6 (Pseudomiopterygini); Ehrmann 2002: 213, 375 (Oligonicinae, Pogonogasterini); Agudelo *et al.* 2007: 110, 118 (Thespidae, Oligonicinae, Pogonogasterini); Ehrmann & Koçak, 2009: 16 (Thespidae, Oligonicinae, Pogonogasterini); Rivera 2010: 53 (Thespidae, Oligonicinae).