

ON THE IDENTITY OF *ATEMNUS GRACILIS* (PSEUDOSCORPIONES: MENTHIDAE)¹

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ABSTRACT: *Atemnus gracilis* Banks (1909) has, since 1932, been placed in the genus *Lustrochernes* (Family Chernetidae). It is now shown to belong in *Menthus* (Menthidae) and to be a senior synonym of *Minniza lindahli* Chamberlin (1923).

Recently, while browsing through Harvey's "Catalogue of the Pseudoscorpionida" (1991), I noticed that *Atemnus gracilis* Banks 1909 was assigned to the chernetid genus *Lustrochernes* Beier 1932. Knowing that this assignment is incorrect, I checked back through my notes and came to realize that the misidentification is, in part, my fault. Now I would like to set the record straight — *Atemnus gracilis* is actually a representative of the menthid genus *Menthus* Chamberlin 1930.

Atemnus gracilis was described briefly by Banks (1909) on the basis of material "From Sonora, Mexico" (no other collection information and no illustrations were given). Beier (1932) deemed the description to be insufficient ("ungenügend"), but placed the species as an "unsichere Art" under the chernetid genus *Lustrochernes*. Roewer (1937) followed Beier and placed it doubtfully in *Lustrochernes*. As far as I know, there was no other mention of *Atemnus gracilis* in the literature until Harvey included it in his catalogue as *Lustrochernes gracilis*, without indicating any doubt about the generic assignment (1991: 595).

A number of years ago, I received for study from the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, the type collection of *Atemnus gracilis*. There were 2 male pseudoscorpions in the vial; the original labels read "*Atemnus gracilis* Bks. type" and "San Miguel Horcasitas Sonora Mex. May Eisen"; more recent labels read "Nathan Banks Collection" and "M. C. Z. *Atemnus gracilis* Banks SYNTYPES SONORA: San Miguel Horcasita [sic]". [The material was collected by Gustav Eisen in May 1892 (see Eisen 1895: 763)]. I cleared the two specimens, mounted them on microscope slides, and numbered them with my catalog numbers WM4533.01001-2. I studied them in detail and determined that they belong to the genus *Menthus*. At that time, inexplicably, I was unaware that the species had been described; I thought that Banks had assigned a name to the specimens but had not published a description. Later, when Harvey and I were preparing the manuscript of our study on the family Menthidae, it was my responsibility to research and write the section on *Menthus lindahli* (Chamberlin). I recognized that the specimens of "*Atemnus gracilis*" were conspecific with the holotype of *M. lindahli* (from Tepoca Bay, Sonora, Mexico) and included them in the "Other material examined" for that species, as "Mexico: Sonora: San Miguel Horcasitas, no date, Eisen, 2♂ (MCZ; SL)"

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(Harvey and Muchmore 1990: 950). Now that I am aware that *Atemnus gracilis* Banks is a validly described species, it becomes clear that *Minniza lindahli* Chamberlin is a junior subjective synonym of that species, which should now be called *Menthus gracilis* (Banks). A complete synonymy follows.

Family Menthidae Chamberlin

Genus *Menthus* Chamberlin

Menthus gracilis (Banks), NEW COMBINATION

Atemnus gracilis Banks 1909: 146.

Minniza lindahli Chamberlin 1923: 365-366, pl. II, fig. 12. NEW SYNONYMY.

Menthus lindahli (Chamberlin): Chamberlin 1930: 587; Beier 1932: 178; Roewer 1937: 259; Roth and Brown 1976: 128; Lee 1979: 18-19, figs. 22, 23, 31; Roth and Brown 1980: 349; Harvey and Muchmore 1990: 950-951, figs. 11-13; Harvey 1991: 261.

Lustrochernes(?) *gracilis* (Banks): Beier 1932: 95; Roewer 1937: 290.

Lustrochernes gracilis (Banks): Harvey 1991: 595.

At this time I take the opportunity to designate the specimen (male) numbered WM4533.01001 as LECTOTYPE of *Atemnus gracilis* Banks, the other male specimen becoming a paralectotype.

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