

THE REDISCOVERY OF AUSTRALOBIUS SCABRIOR CHAMBERLIN (CHILOPODA: LITHOBIIDAE)

E.H. EASON

Bourton Far Hill Farm, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucester, GL56 9TN, U.K.

Abstract

Australobius scabrior Chamberlin is recorded from Fitzroy I., Great Barrier Reef, Queensland, the first record since the holotype. Both sexes are described.

Introduction

Chamberlin (1920) created the genus *Australobius* to receive *A. scabrior* Chamberlin, the type species, based on a single male from Kuranda, northern Queensland, Australia. This species has not hitherto been rediscovered. Eason (1978) reviewed *Australobius* and its constituent species.

Recently, Dr Rowland Shelley (Raleigh, North Carolina) sent me two specimens from Fitzroy Island, Great Barrier Reef, collected by Dr Harold Heatwole in 1969. These specimens, a male and a female, are so pale as to be almost colourless and are in poor condition with many legs missing, making examination difficult. However there is little doubt that they belong to *A. scabrior*. Fitzroy I. is only some 100 km from the type locality and no other species of Lithobiidae are known from Australia. The specimens will be deposited in the Queensland Museum, Brisbane.

Australobius scabrior Chamberlin

Australobius scabrior Chamberlin, 1920: 76.

Description of female

Length: 11 mm. Antennae: 5.0 mm long with 20 articles on both sides; articles slightly elongate, the terminal one 2.5 times as long as broad. Ocelli: very pale and difficult to see but there appears to be a large posterior ocellus preceded by at least two, almost as large, in the superior row, with one or two smaller ones in the inferior row. Prosternum: typical of *Australobius* (see Eason 1978), with 4+5 teeth, all much the same size, the lateral tooth on both sides placed slightly more posteriorly than the others; porodont short and slender, placed medial to the lateral tooth. Tergites: T, 9, 11 and 13 with small posterior projections; large tergites strongly wrinkled on the surface, with marginal ridges broad and raised and posterior borders almost straight. Coxal pores: circular, 3, 4, 5, 4. Tarsal articulations: distinct. 15th legs: 4.5 mm long with well developed accessory apical claws. Gonopods: with 2+3 spurs and bidentate claws.

Description of male

Length: 10 mm. Similar to female but with 20 antennal articles on one side, 21 on the other. 15th legs missing but the 14th leg, missing on one side but intact on the other, is slightly swollen, suggesting that the 15th legs in males are even more swollen.

Spinulation

Taken from both specimens which, between them, have at least one of the last three pairs of legs intact.

Leg	Ventral					Dorsal			
	C	tr	P	F	T	C	P	F	T
13	-	-	amp	amp	am	-	amp	p	p
14	-	m	amp	amp	a	-	amp	p	-
15	-	m	am(p)	am	a	a	mp	-	-

(VpP is present on only one of the available 15th legs.)

Remarks

Chamberlin's original description is rather deficient, making no mention of the 15th leg, but is in fair agreement with the above. Chamberlin also noted 21-22 antennal articles and a strong median longitudinal furrow on each tergite. He failed to detect the porodont, which is very inconspicuous, barely differentiated from the setae and not placed lateral to the prosternal tooth as in most species of Lithobiidae known to Chamberlin at the time of his description. I now consider *Australobius* to represent a distinct genus, not a subgenus as placed by Eason (1978).

References

- CHAMBERLIN, R.V. 1920. The Myriapoda of the Australian region. *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard* 64: 1-269.
- EASON, E.H. 1978. On Lithobiidae from the Seychelles with descriptions of two new species of the subgenus *Australobius*, genus *Lithobius* (Chilopoda: Lithobiomorpha). *Journal of Zoology, London* 184: 21-34.



Eason, E. H. 1996. "The rediscovery of *Australobius scabrior* Chamberlin (Chilopoda: Lithobiidae)." *The Australian Entomologist* 23(3), 91–92.

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