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Article

Two rare water mite species (Acari, Hydrachnidia) from the streams of the Indian eastern Himalayan region

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Abstract

Two rare water mite species (Acari, Hydrachnidia), i.e., *Torrenticola malaisei* (Lundblad, 1941) and *Momonides trabecularis* Lundblad, 1941, are reported from streams in the eastern Himalayan region in India. *Torrenticola malaisei* (Lundblad, 1941) has been discovered after 70 years and the first description of the male is given; the synonymization of *T. lamellifera* (Lundblad, 1941) with *T. malaisei* proposed by Wiles (1997) is not accepted; the male of *M. trabecularis* is described for the first time.

Key words: water mite, Himalayas, systematics, first description

Introduction

A recent checklist of Indian water mites reported 275 species in 70 genera and 25 families of water mites (Pešić *et al.* 2010b). However, large portions of the Indian Himalayan region are still poorly studied (Walter 1928; Lundblad 1934; Cook 1967; Panesar & Gerecke 1994; Panesar 2004; Pešić & Panesar 2008, 2009; Pešić & Gerecke 2008; Smit & Pešić 2008; Pešić *et al.* 2010b). This applies especially to the watermite fauna of North-eastern India which belongs to the Eastern Himalayas biodiversity hotspot (Myers *et al.* 2000), where the water mite fauna is very incompletely known (see: Pešić *et al.* 2010b for details).

During a recent survey of the water mite fauna of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, the two north-eastern Indian states, two rare water mite species were discovered. Descriptions of these species are given in this paper.

Material and methods

Water mites were collected by hand netting, sorted on the spot from the living material, preserved in 75% ethanol and dissected as described elsewhere (e.g. Gerecke 2007). It is worth noting that preserving specimens in alcohol presents a number of difficulties (see: Pešić *et al*. 2010a for details) which also applies to the present study. All specimens are deposited in the Museum of the Natural History of Podgorica (Montenegro). For the general discussion of the systematic value and the measurements of morphological features in *Torrenticola*, see Cicolani & Di Sabatino (1990).

