

Additions to the Indian oribatid mite fauna, with description of a new species of the genus *Niphocephus* (Acari, Oribatida)

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Abstract

An annotated checklist of oribatid mite taxa from three sites of India is presented. It includes 71 species/subspecies, 55 genera and 35 families. Twenty nine species/subspecies are recorded for the first time in India; five species/subspecies—*Trhypochthonius tectorum stercus*, *Hermanniella aliverdievae*, *Sphodrocephus tridactylus*, *Caenosamerus spatiosus*, *Dolicheremaeu distinctus*—are recorded for the first time in the Oriental region. *Niphocephus neotrichus* **sp. nov.** (Niphocephidae) is described; it differs from other known species of *Niphocephus* by the presence of epimeral neotrichy and three pairs of anal setae.

Key words: oribatid mites, fauna, checklist, new record, new species, *Niphocephus*, India

Introduction

This work is the final part of our study of oribatid mites (Acari, Oribatida) from India (Ermilov & Kalúz 2013a–e; Niedbala & Ermilov 2013; Ermilov *et al.* 2013a–c), collected by our colleagues, L. Dembický and O. Šauša, in 2012. The first goal of this paper is to present an annotated checklist of recorded oribatids and also to annotate the species that are recorded from India and the Oriental region for the first time.

In the course of taxonomic identification we found one specimen (holotype) of a new species, which belongs to the genus *Niphocephus* Balogh, 1943 (Niphocephidae). We have found a second specimen (paratype) of this species in parallel research when studying of oribatid mites from Nepal¹. The secondary goal of our paper is to describe and illustrate this new species, based on the Indian and Nepalese specimens.

At present, Niphocephidae is monogeneric, comprising only the genus *Niphocephus*. It was proposed by Balogh (1943) with *Cepheus nivalis* Schweizer, 1922 as the type species. Currently, the genus comprises four species and three subspecies, which are collectively distributed in the Palaearctic and Oriental regions (Subías 2004, updated 2013). The main characters of *Niphocephus* are (Balogh 1943; Weigmann 2006; including our additions): body size large; body surface covered by tuberculate cerotegument; notogaster and anogenital region with sculpturing; lamellae with cusps, which are fused medially or connected by translamella; sensilli short, clavate; 12 pairs of notogastral setae moderately short; pedotecta I divided into two parts; epimeral setal formula 3–1–3–4 or epimeral neotrichy present; discidia large, widely rounded anteriorly; 11–18 pairs of genital

1. Results of the Himalaya Expeditions of Dr. Jochen Martens.

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