

## Short communication

### *Seramba* THORELL 1887 is a synonym of *Thelcticopis* KARSCH 1884 (Arachnida, Araneae, Sparassidae, Sparianthinae)

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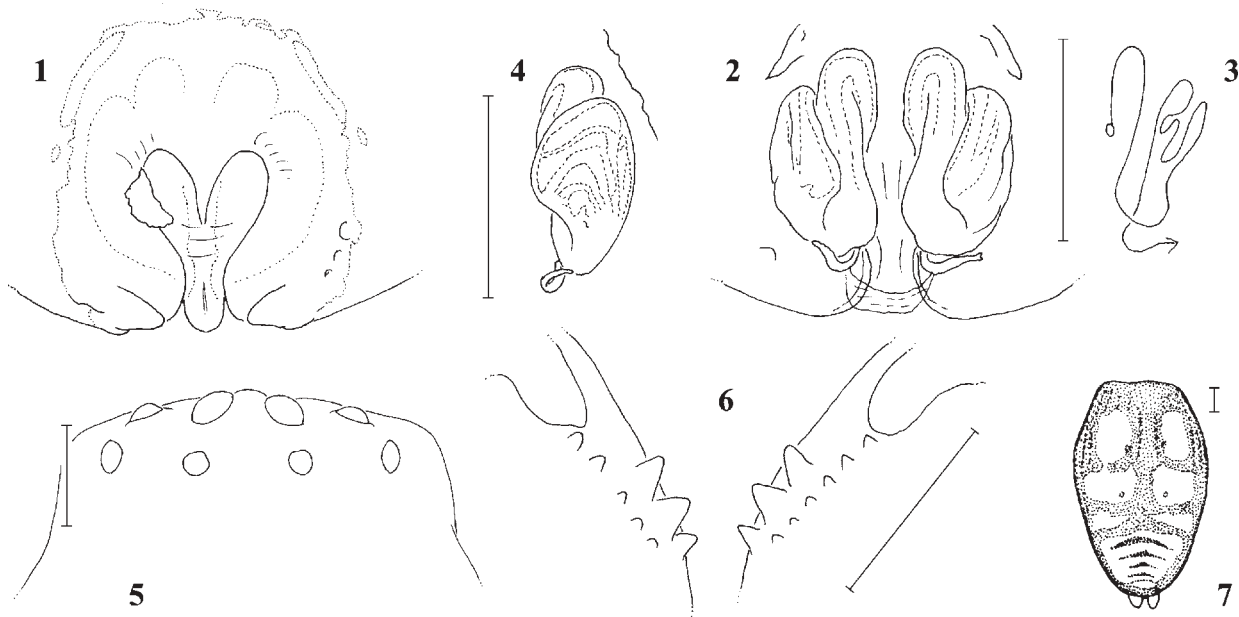
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Most revisional work on the spider family Sparassidae BERTKAU 1872 was done so far for the subfamilies Heteropodinae THORELL 1873 (Australia: DAVIES 1994; Asia: e.g. JÄGER 2002) and Deleninae HOGG 1903 (Australia: e.g. HIRST 1990). The subfamily Sparianthinae SIMON 1897 received little attention and was included only marginally in taxonomic revisions. JÄGER (1998) proposed a character combination for identifying members of this subfamily. JÄGER & YIN (2001) recognized a synonym at species level, DEELEMANN-REINHOLD (2001) recognized *Mardonia* THORELL 1897 (formerly in Lio-cranidae) as a junior synonym of *Seramba* (THORELL 1887). An identification key for African genera of Sparassidae (including four genera of Sparianthinae) will be published (JÄGER & KUNZ 2005, in press). Representatives of Sparianthinae are distributed in a tropical belt in South and Central America, Africa, Asia and Australia (JÄGER 2001). The 75 species known as belonging to this subfamily are presently arranged in nine genera [with number of species and distribution range in brackets]: *Pleorotus* SIMON 1898 [1; Seychelles], *Pseudosparianthis* SIMON 1887 [11; South and Central America], *Rhacocnemis* SIMON 1897 [1; Seychelles], *Seramba* THORELL 1887 (= *Mardonia* THORELL 1897) [11; SE Asia, Australasia, Africa, Central America, but see comments below], *Sparianthis* SIMON 1880 [3; South and Central America], *Stasina* SIMON 1877 [16; SE Asia, Africa, South and Central America, but see comments below], *Stipax* SIMON 1898 [1; Seychelles], *Thelcticopis* KARSCH 1884 [33; SE Asia, Australasia, Austropacific], *Thomasettia* HIRST 1911 [1; Seychelles].

During a stay in the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Genova (Italy) the female holotype of *Seramba picta* THORELL 1887 was located and examined, and is illustrated here (Figs. 1–7; PJ 1666, original label: “*Seramba picta* THOR. Typus! Birmania, Schwego [= Shwegu?] Myo, 1885, L FEA”). The similarity between the genitalia of the female holotype with that of *Thelcticopis severa* L. KOCH 1875, the type species of *Thelcticopis*, made it appear worthwhile to investigate taxonomical characters and nomenclatural consequences.

The genus *Seramba* was erected by THORELL (1887) for one species, which he newly described in the same publication: *Seramba picta* THORELL 1887. In his diagnosis THORELL distinguished the genera *Seramba* and *Thelcticopis* by the shape of the prosoma and the eye arrangement. Taking into account that the original descriptions of both genera were monotypic, it becomes clear that the characters used to distinguish between these two taxa were good only at species level. As usual in that era the genitalia were not considered as important for systematics as they are today. The concept of the genus *Thelcticopis* by L. KOCH was not recognized by THORELL. Subsequently he described a generic synonym, as the epigyne of the female holotype of *Seramba picta* shows exactly the same groundplan as that of *Thelcticopis severa*: the median septum (Davies 1994) is somewhat heart-shaped with a tongue-like posterior structure pointing in direction of the epigastric furrow. Two lateral hooks are present at the posterior margin of the epigyne, pointing to the median line (Fig. 1). The internal duct system (Figs. 2–3) exhibits the same schematic course as in *Thelcticopis*. The same is true for the eye arrangement (Fig. 5), the cheliceral dentition (Fig. 6) and the opisthosomal pattern (Fig. 7). The genitalia are so similar that it cannot be excluded that both species are even synonymous, too. A final decision on the latter case can only be made with a revision of more material to investigate intraspecific variation. From these reasons *Seramba* is proposed as junior synonym of *Thelcticopis* syn. nov. POCOCK (1900) placed *S. picta* already in *Thelcticopis*, but this was formally not accepted by subsequent catalogers (e.g. PLATNICK 2004).

All nominal species presently included in *Seramba* are herewith formally transferred to *Thelcticopis*: *T. bifasciatus* (THORELL, 1891) comb. nov., *T. fasciatus* (THORELL, 1897) comb. nov., *T. humilithorax* (SIMON, 1910) comb. nov.\*, *T. pennatus* (SIMON, 1901) comb. nov., *T. pestai* (REIMOSER, 1939) comb. nov.\*, *T. pictus* (THORELL, 1887) comb. rev.\*, *T. quadrimunitus* (STRAND, 1911) comb. nov., *T. sagittatus* (HOGG, 1915) comb. nov.\*, *T. salomonum* (STRAND, 1913) comb. nov.\*, *T.*



Figs. 1–7. *Thelcticopsis pictus* (THORELL 1887) comb. rev., holotype female. 1: epigyne, ventral view. 2: vulva, dorsal view. 3: schematic course of internal duct system, dorsal view. 4: vulva, right half, lateral view. 5: eye arrangement, dorsal view. 6: cheliceral dentition, ventral view. 7: opisthosoma, dorsal view. — Scale bars: 1 mm.

*scaurus* (SIMON, 1910) comb. nov., *T. truculentus* KARSCH, 1884 comb. rev.\* [\* type series examined]. Together with the 11 species transferred here, *Thelcticopsis* contains now 44 species in total. However, some of them will certainly turn out to belong to different genera, especially those from Africa and South America (JÄGER & KUNZ 2005, in press, and unpubl. data). A final placement of these species or possibly necessary new descriptions of genera will be included later in regional revisions.

With the newly transferred species the distribution range of *Thelcticopsis* is extended to the Nicobar Islands and Solomon Islands. Formerly, species were known from southeast Asian, Australasian and Austropacific countries: India (Andaman Islands), Sri Lanka, Myanmar, China, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia

(Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Sulawesi, Amboina, Moluccas, Aru Islands, Irian Jaya), Papua New Guinea (New Guinea, New Britain), Micronesia and Fiji. Unpublished records are known from Vietnam and Laos.

Further genera, e.g. *Stasina* SIMON 1877, show a disjunct distribution and, according to results of other genera, should be investigated in terms of possible synonymies and transfers as well as potential restrictions to distinct geographic regions.

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