

## ***Cebrennus sumer* sp. nov. (Araneae: Sparassidae): first record of the genus in Iraq**

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### **Abstract**

The genus *Cebrennus* Simon, 1880 is recorded for the first time from Iraq. A new species, *Cebrennus sumer* sp. nov. is described from deserts of the Abu Gaar region in Dhi Qar governorate, southern Iraq.

**Keywords:** Dhi Qar • huntsman spiders • taxonomy

### **Introduction**

The spider family Sparassidae Bertkau, 1872 is a rather large taxon with 88 genera and 1225 species worldwide (World Spider Catalog 2018). Representatives are huntsman spiders, occurring in tropical and subtropical regions of the world with only a few species occurring in colder climates (Jäger 2001). Several species are adapted to arid environments like deserts, steppes, or savannahs. Three species in two genera have been recorded from Iraq so far: *Eusparassus mesopotamicus* Moradmand & Jäger, 2012 (Moradmand & Jäger 2012; Moradmand 2013), *E. walckenaeri* (Audouin, 1826) (Reimoser 1913; Moradmand & Jäger 2012), and *Olios iranii* (Pocock, 1901) (Moradmand, Kakhki & Hula 2015).

Simon (1880) described the genus *Cebrennus*, including at that time only two species. It currently consists of 18 species, including three species recorded in countries neighbouring Iraq, e.g. Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran (World Spider Catalog 2018). Members of the genus live in arid desert environments (Jäger 2014). The governorate of Dhi Qar is located in southern Iraq, and is characterized by arid desert regions with a rough sandy nature. Hitherto, only two studies have been published on spiders in the Dhi Qar governorate area: Al-Khazali (2018) and Al-Khazali & Najim (2018). In this paper, we describe a new species of the genus *Cebrennus* Simon, 1880, a genus which has not been recorded previously from Iraq.

### **Material and methods**

Arising points of tegular appendages are given as clock positions of the unexpanded left palp in ventral view. Leg and palp measurements are given as: total (femur, patella, tibia, metatarsus, and tarsus). Spination pattern follows

Davies (1994): sums of all spines are listed (prolateral, dorsal, retrolateral, ventral); when ventral spines are absent, only three digits are listed. Leg formula is given as order of legs according to their length (femur to tarsus) in Arabic numbers. Size classes is given according to Jäger (2001): small (<10 mm), medium (>10 and <20 mm), large (>20 and <30 mm), very large (>30 mm). Photographs were taken using a Nikon camera on an EZ4 stereomicroscope. Measurements are in millimetres. Material is stored in 70% denatured ethanol and is deposited in INHM (Iraq Natural History Museum), Baghdad, Iraq.

Abbreviations: I–IV = legs I to IV, ALE = anterior lateral eyes, AME = anterior median eyes, PLE = posterior lateral eyes, PME = posterior median eyes, RTA = retrolateral tibial apophysis.

### **Sparassidae Bertkau, 1872**

#### ***Cebrennus* Simon, 1880**

##### ***villosus* group**

*Diagnosis:* See Jäger (2000).

*Species included:* *C. laurae* Jäger, 2014, *C. concolor* (Denis, 1947), *C. intermedius* Jäger, 2000, *C. sumer* sp. nov., *C. villosus* (Jézéquel & Junqua, 1966), *C. rechenbergi* Jäger, 2014.

*Distribution:* Northern Africa (Canary Islands, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt), Asia (Saudi Arabia, Iraq).

#### ***Cebrennus sumer* sp. nov. (Figs. 1–3)**

*Type material:* Holotype male, IRAQ: Dhi Qar province: Abu Gaar region, 30°41.256'N 46°25.879'E, 0 m a.s.l., c. 50 km SE of Al-Nasiriyah town, desert along highway 1 between Dhi Qar and Basra governorates, 15 August 2017 (INHM).

*Diagnosis:* The palp of this new species is most similar to that of *C. intermedius* Jäger, 2000 (Jäger 2000: 178, figs. 61–67) in having a relatively short embolus and a short RTA. It can be distinguished from *C. intermedius* by the distal embolus only slightly curved with the tip extending in the proximal half of tegulum (Fig. 2E; distal embolus helical and barely reaching proximal half of tegulum in *C. intermedius*) and the RTA tip retrolatero-distad (distad in *C. intermedius*).

*Etymology:* The specific name is derived from the Sumer civilization 2400–2850 BC, one of the ancient civilizations known in southern Mesopotamia (currently southern Iraq), where the city of Ur is the capital of Sumerian Kingdom, which is currently 15 km from the center of Dhi Qar governorate; noun in apposition.

*Description of male* (Fig. 1): Small sized Sparassidae; total length 8.9. Carapace length 5.0, width 4.2, anterior width 2.3, opisthosoma length 3.9, width 2.8. Anterior and posterior eye row slightly recurved; AME 0.38, ALE 0.25, PME 0.19, PLE 0.31, AME–AME 0.14, AME–ALE 0.07, PME–PME 0.51, PME–PLE 0.56, AME–PME 0.44, ALE–PLE 0.40, clypeus AME 0.11, clypeus ALE 0.18 (Fig. 2D).

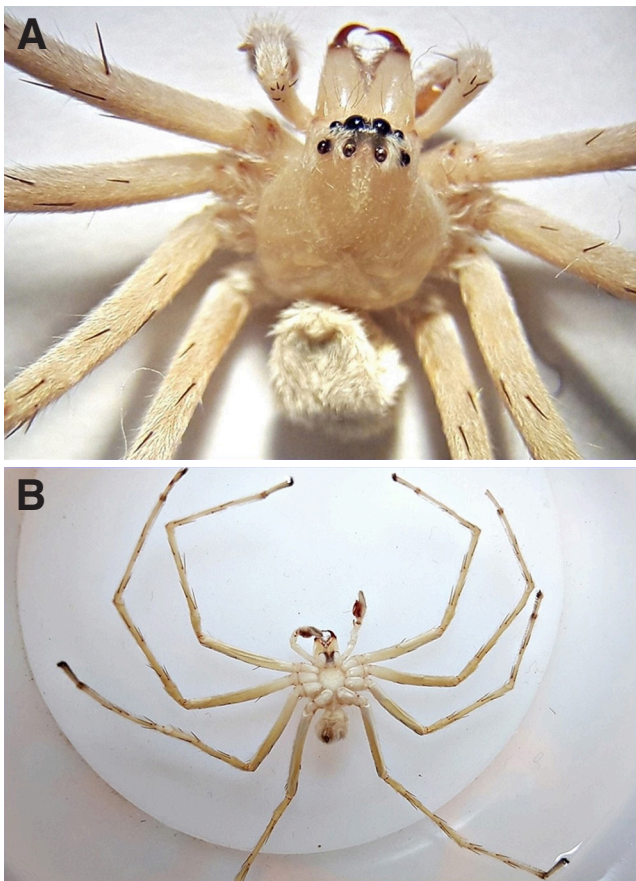


Fig. 1: *Cebrennus sumer* sp. nov., holotype male from Abu Gaar region in southern Iraq, habitus. **A** dorsal; **B** ventral. Photographs by A. Al-Khazali.

Chelicera with 2 anterior and 3 adnate posterior teeth, retromargin with 5 bristles at base of fang (Fig. 2F). Leg formula: 2413. Measurements of palp and legs: palp 6.3 (2.3, 0.7, 1.1, -, 2.2), leg I 27.8 (8.2, 2.1, 7.1, 8.2, 2.2), leg II 31.6 (9.9, 2.3, 8.1, 8.9, 2.4), leg III 27.3 (8.9, 2.2, 6.2, 7.9, 2.1), leg IV 29.9 (9.7, 2.2, 7.3, 8.7, 2.0). Spination: palps: 121, 000, 0000, 1000; legs: femur I 323, II 3(4)22, III 323, IV 322; patella 000; tibia I–IV 2024; metatarsi I–III 2024, IV 3036. Ventral metatarsi and tarsi I–IV with scopula, without spines or bristles distally.

Palp as in diagnosis (Fig. 2A–C). Cymbium twice as long as tibia, with triangular tip, dorsal and ventral cymbium with dense scopula in distal half. RTA shorter than tegulum, distal tip blackish. Tegulum S-shaped in prolateral view (Fig. 2A). Embolus arising in 10.30 o'clock position from tegulum, its tip situated in a 4 o'clock position, kink situated approximately in a 1 o'clock position. Conductor apically semi-circular (Fig. 2E).

Colouration (in ethanol). Body pale yellowish white without distinct pattern. Dorsal carapace yellowish; sternum, ventral coxae and femora pale yellowish. Labium and gnathocoxae yellowish white with tufts of brown bristles. Fangs of chelicerae, spines, and claw tufts reddish-brown. Live specimen with pale grey areas on dorsal and ventral opisthosoma and dorsal cymbium in distal half.

Female unknown.

*Distribution and habitat*: Only known from the type locality in the Abu Gaar region in southern Iraq (Fig. 3). The holotype was collected in a desert during the night.

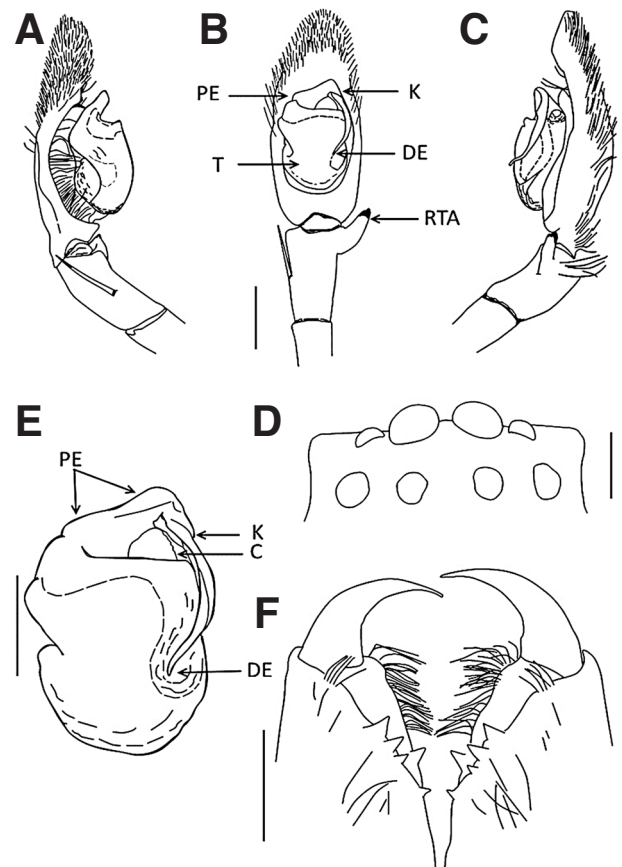


Fig. 2: *Cebrennus sumer* sp. nov., holotype male from Abu Gaar region, southern Iraq. **A** left palp, prolateral view; **B** left palp, ventral view; **C** left palp, retrolateral view; **D** eye arrangement, dorsal view; **E** bulbus, ventral view; **F** chelicerae, ventral view. Abbreviations: C = conductor, DE = distal part of embolus, K = kink of embolus, PE = proximal part of embolus, RTA = retrolateral tibial apophysis, T = tegulum. Scale bars = 2 mm (a–D, F), 0.6 mm (E). Drawings by A. Al-Khazali.

### Acknowledgements

The first author would like to thank sincerely his dear colleague Hussein Mohammed for helping during field trips and Noor Naim for continuing moral support during this study.

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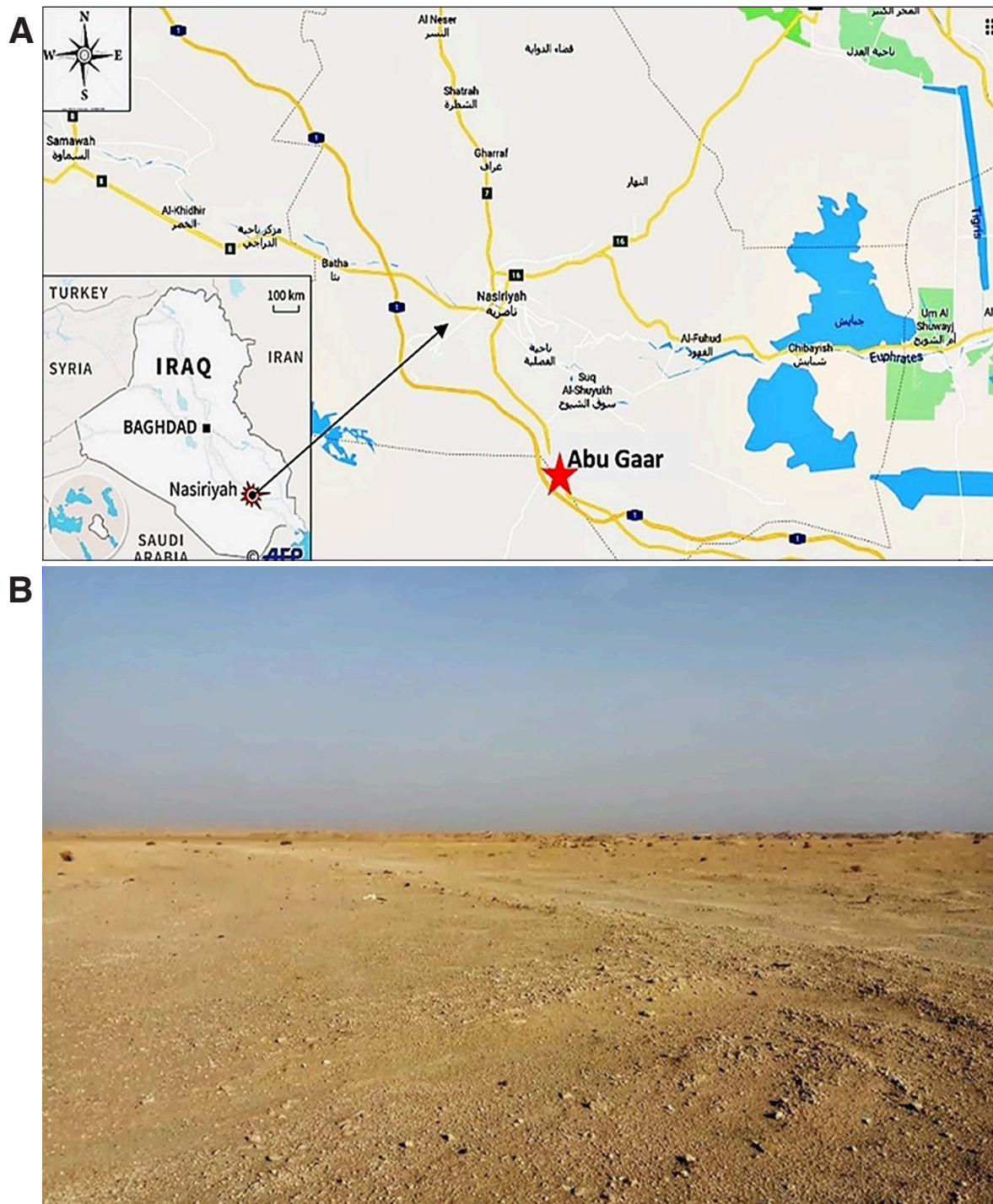


Fig. 3: **A** map with the collecting locality (star) of *Cebrennus sumer* sp. nov.; **B** habitat, type locality, desert Abu Gaar region, Dhi Qar governorate, southern Iraq.

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