

A PRELIMINARY LIST OF SPIDER FAUNA OF PACHMARHI BIOSPHERE RESERVE, MADHYA PRADESH

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Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve (20°10'-22°50'N & 77°45'-78°56'E) is situated in the Satpura Hill ranges of Madhya Pradesh. It is an area of 4926.28km² that covers Hoshangabad, Betul and Chhindwara districts of Madhya Pradesh. It encompasses three wildlife conservation units, viz., the Bori Sanctuary, the Satpura National Park and the Pachmarhi Sanctuary. This tract of the Satpura hill ranges is well known for its biological diversity and is one of the most important conservation areas in the state.

The present account of spider fauna is based on a faunal survey conducted in October 2002 in Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve. This is only a preliminary study. In near future, more faunal surveys are planned to study in detail the diversity of Araneae and other fauna occurring in Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve.

Scientific names are after Platnick (2002).

Class Arachnida

Order Araneae (Spiders)

Mimetidae

Mimetes sp.

1992. *Mimetes* Gajbe, Rec. zool. Surv. India 91(3-4): 427.

Material examined: One male, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Remarks: The *Mimetes* spiders invade the webs of other spiders to prey upon the web owners. Due to this habit, they are commonly known as pirate spiders.

Eresidae

Stegodyphus pacificus Pocock

1900. *Stegodyphus pacificus* Pocock, Fauna British India, Arachnida: 209.

Material examined: Five females, 30.x.2002, Pachmarhi Road, Hoshangabad Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta; 13 females, 31.x.2002, Pipariya Road, Hoshangabad Dist., Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Western India.

Remarks: This is a colonial species, with up to several individuals living together in a single web.

Stegodyphus sarasinorum Karsch

1900. *Stegodyphus sarasinorum* Pocock, Fauna British India, Arachnida: 209.

Material examined: One female, 1.xi.2002, Tekapar, Hoshangabad Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta; one female, 31.x.2002, Pipariya Road, Hoshangabad, coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab, West Bengal.

Remarks: This is a colonial species. Hundreds of these spiders live together in very large webs.

Tetragnathidae

Leucauge decorata (Blackwall)

1982. *Leucauge decorata* Tikader, Fauna of India, Spiders, 2(1): 78.

Material examined: One female, 18.x.2002, Sitadongri, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta; one female, 1.xi.2002, Tekapar, Hoshangabad Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta; two female, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orissa, Pondicherry, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.

Nephila pilipes (Fabricius)

1982. *Nephila maculata* Tikader, Fauna of India, Spiders, 2(1): 97.

Material examined: Five females, 27.xi.2001, Pandri nala, Bori, Pachmarhi, Hoshangabad Dist. R.K. Singh; Two females, 19.x.2002, Bahmani, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.

Remarks: This species makes one of the largest orb webs. These webs appear golden in the sunlight.

Tetragnatha geniculata Karsch

1900. *Tetragnatha geniculata* Pocock, Fauna British India, Arachnida, 215.

Material examined: One female, one male, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra.

Remarks: This species makes its webs on vegetation overhanging the edge of ponds and other such water bodies.

Tetragnatha sp. 1

1900. *Tetragnatha* Pocock, Fauna British India, Arachnida, 214.

Material examined: One male, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist. coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Tetragnatha sp. 2

1900. *Tetragnatha* Pocock, Fauna British India, Arachnida, 214.

Material examined: One female, one male, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Remarks: Genus *Eucta* Simon, 1881 is synonymised with Genus *Tetragnatha* Latreille, 1804 by Levi, 1981a: 282 (see Platnick, 2002).

Araneidae

Argiope aemula (Walckenaer)

1982. *Argiope aemula* Tikader, Fauna of India, Spiders 2(1): 119.

Material examined: One female, 30.x.2002, Pachmarhi Road, Hoshangabad Dist. coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh,

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Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal,

Remarks: This large, showy spider makes an X-shaped stabilimentum in its web. Sometimes, the stabilimentum is irregular in shape.

***Neoscona muckerjei* Tikader**

1982. *Neoscona muckerjei* Tikader, Fauna of India, Spiders, 2(1): 248.

Material examined: Two exs., 26.10.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta,

Distribution: Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

***Neoscona platnicki* Gajbe & Gajbe**

2000a. *Neoscona platnicki* Gajbe & Gajbe, Rec. Zool. Surv. India 98(2): 119.

Material examined: Two females, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Madhya Pradesh.

***Neoscona theis* (Walckenaer)**

1982. *Neoscona theis* Tikader, Fauna of India, Spiders, 2(1): 269.

Material examined: One ex., 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist. coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, and West Bengal.

Lycosidae

***Hippasa hansae* Gajbe & Gajbe**

1999. *Hippasa hansae* Gajbe & Gajbe, Rec. Zool. Surv. India 97(4): 23.

Material examined: Two females, 22.x.2002, Patalkot, near Tamia, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Madhya Pradesh.

***Pardosa* sp.**

1980. *Pardosa* Tikader & Malhotra, Fauna of India, Spiders, 1(2): 315.

Material examined: One female, 22.x.2002, Patalkot, near Tamia, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Oxyopidae

***Oxyopes pankaji* Gajbe & Gajbe**

2000b. *Oxyopes pankaji* Gajbe & Gajbe, Rec. zool. Surv. India 98(2): 123.

Material examined: One female, 30.x.2002, Pachmarhi Road, Hoshangabad Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta; four females, 26.x.2002, Jamai, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta; three females, 19.x.2002, Bahmani, Chhindwara Dist., coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Distribution: Madhya Pradesh.

Thomisidae

***Runcinia* sp.**

1980. *Runcinia* Tikader, Fauna of India, Spiders, 1(1): 58.

Material examined: One female, 18.x.2002, Sitadongri, Delahari, Chhindwara Dist. coll. Y.N. Gupta.

Remarks: This species is found on vegetation. It is a diurnal spider, preying

mainly on insects visiting flowers.

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