

Clubionids of the granitic islands of Seychelles (Aranea, Clubionidae)

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Abstract

In this paper new data on two endemic clubionids from the granitic Seychelles are presented. The female of "*Clubiona*" *nigromaculosa* Blackwall, 1877 is described for the first time. Figures of the genital organs of "*Clubiona*" *mahensis* Simon, 1893 are presented also for the first time. Their relation with the genus *Clubiona* is discussed briefly.

Introduction

The taxonomy of the family Clubionidae is still poorly done at the genus level. This is reflected by the fact that of its ca. 600 species about 2/3 are currently placed in a single genus, viz. *Clubiona*.

From the Seychelles two *Clubiona* species have been reported, viz. *Clubiona nigromaculosa* Blackwall, 1877 and *Clubiona mahensis* Simon, 1893. Of these, the first mentioned was described from a juvenile specimen. The second was originally described from a single female from Mahé. Its type seems to have been lost and accordingly Benoit (1978) designed a neotype though not from Mahé but from Praslin. Neither of these species seems to be congeneric with the type species of the genus, viz. *Clubiona pallidula* (Clerck, 1758). However, at the present no attempt has been made to place them more accurately although the generic name has been used in quotation marks to highlight the author's view that they are not members of the genus *Clubiona*. At the present, both species are known only from the Seychelles.

The female of "*C.*" *nigromaculosa* is described here for the first time. Also, because Benoit (1978) did not present any figures of "*C.*" *mahensis*, these are presented here.

The material treated below belongs to the following collections:

MRAC = Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium.

MZT = Zoological Museum of Turku University, Finland.

"Clubiona" nigromaculosa Blackwall, 1877

Fig. 1A-D

Clubiona nigromaculosa Blackwall, 1877: 11 (immature female).

-"-, Simon 1893: 207.

-"-, Hirst 1911: 382.

-"-, Benoit 1978: 942.

Diagnosis: The female of this species may be easily recognized by the peculiar pattern on the abdomen, and the structure of the epigyne (Fig. 1A & D).

Description: Female (male unknown). Total length 7.9 mm, length of carapace 3.2mm. Cephalothorax and appendages yellowish brown. Dark markings extend from fovea up to the posterior eyes on each side of the cephalothorax. Abdomen dirty white with a complicated pattern of dark, somewhat violetish markings comprising a short median band and various dots and streaks. Chelicerae with three frontal and two posterior teeth. Of the frontal teeth the middle one is largest and from the most basal one a shallow carina extends towards the base of the paturon. The posterior teeth are small and of equal size.

Epigyne with a large, shallow transverse oval depression positioned anteriorly and fairly far from the epigastric fold. Entrance holes are present on both sides of the posterior margin of that depression.

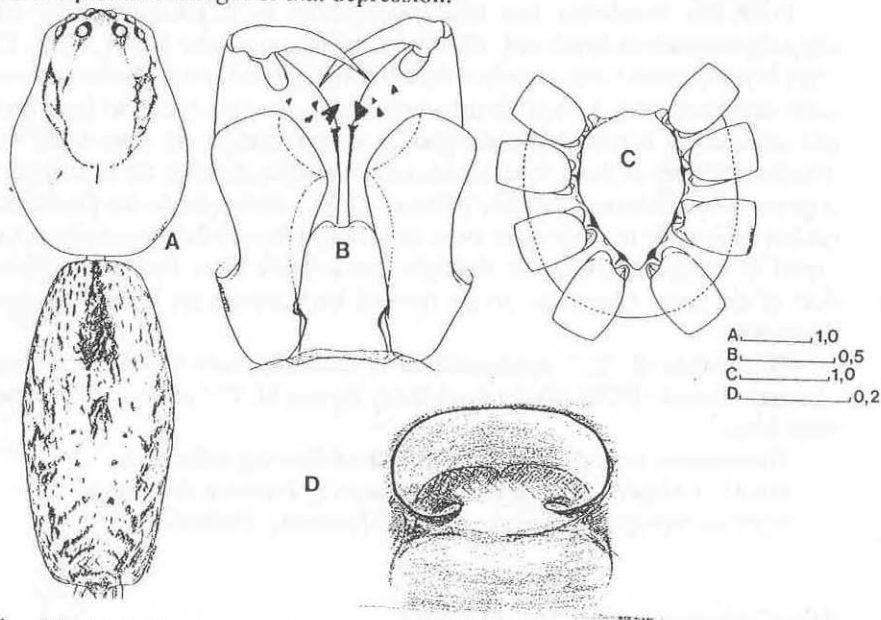


Fig. 1. "*Clubiona*" *nigromaculosa* Blackwall, 1877. Original figure (scale bar length in millimetres).

A) Dorsal view of the female. B) Chelicerae, maxillae and labium posteriorly. C) Sternum and coxae ventrally. D) Epigyne ventrally.

Distribution: The species was originally described from a juvenile specimen and its exact locality is unknown. It is now known from:

Anonyme: Hirst (1911)

Aride: 1 juv., 1975, Mühlenberg legend (MZT AA 0.087)

Cousin: 2 juv., Mar/Ap. 1978, Hugh Watkins legend (MZT AA 0.085 & 0.086)

Mahé: Simon (1893)

Silhouette: 1 female, *Pisonia* forest, 1990, Justin Gerlach legend (MZT AA 0.084).

Discussion: According to Benoit (1978) both Simon's and Hirst's material of this species have been lost. However its type, a juvenile specimen, is still in existence and preserved at the Hope Department of Entomology, University of Oxford: Bottle 290, Tube 9.

"Clubiona" mahensis Simon, 1893

Fig. 2A-D

Clubiona mahensis Simon, 1893: 207 (female).

-"-, Hirst 1911: 382.

-"-, Benoit 1978: 943 (female neotype & male allotype).

Diagnosis: The specimens of this species may be easily recognized by characters of the genital organs (Fig. Aa, Ab & B) and the dentition.

Description: Total length ca. 4.4 mm; carapace length 2.0 mm. Carapace and chelicerae pale yellowish; legs and abdomen dirty white. Chelicerae of female projecting forwards; armed with one large, one smaller and three minute denticles in the frontal row and with 2-3 smaller ones in the posterior row; chelicerae of male nearly vertical. Clypeus very low.

Male palp with an unbranched tibial apophysis. Embolus short, claw-like. Structure of the epigyne difficult to determine but there seem to be small pocket-like structures associated with the entrance holes. Short ducts run from the entrance holes to the fairly large oval shaped receptaculæ.

Distribution: The species is known from:

Mahé: Roche Caiman Bird Sactuary, 1 female subadult, 23.12.1993, Justin Gerlach legend, (MZT AA 0.308); Simon (1893) and (Hirst 1911)

Praslin: Benoit (1978): female neotype & male allotype (MRAC 143.110),

Silhouette: Hirst (1911) and Benoit (1978): 1 male (MRAC 143.157).