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Four Species of Oribatid Mites (Acari: Oribatida) from Central and Southern Mongolia, with Notes on the Genera *Montizetes* and *Zachvatkinibates*

Badamdorj Bayartogtokh

Faculty of Biology, National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar 210646, Mongolia
e-mail: bayartogtokh@num.edu.mn

Abstract

In the present work four species of oribatid mites from central and southern parts of Mongolia are studied, and two of them, namely *Zachvatkinibates mongolicus* sp. nov. and *Montizetes serratus* sp. nov. are described as new to science. Two other species, *Kunstella foveolata* Krivolutsky and *Liebstadia pannonica* (Willmann) are recorded as new to the fauna of Mongolia, and the latter species is reported for the first time from Asia. Description of new and redescription of known species, and data on geographic distribution of known species are given. A new combination, *Montizetes tianshanensis* (Wen) comb. nov. is proposed. Identification keys to the world species of the genera *Zachvatkinibates* and *Montizetes* are provided.

Key words: Acari, Oribatida, *Zachvatkinibates, Montizetes, Kunstella, Liebstadia,* Mongolia

Introduction

The study on biodiversity of oribatid mites of Mongolia is relatively recent and is the subject of ongoing research as part of biodiversity assessments in various ecosystems of the country. Among soil microarthropods, the oribatid mites are one of the numerically dominant groups in different natural habitats, and their description should facilitate further ecological and biogeographical studies on this fauna.

In the course of taxonomic and ecological studies of oribatid mites of Mongolia, several interesting species belonging to the genera *Zachvatkinibates* Shaldybina, *Montizetes* Kunst, *Kunstella* Krivolutsky and *Liebstadia* Oudemans are found from central and southern parts of the country.

The first genus studied here, *Zachvatkinibates* has been represented in Mongolia by single species, while two species of the second genus, *Montizetes* have been recorded previously from Mongolia (Balogh & Mahunka, 1965; Bayartogtokh, 1998; Bayartogtokh & Aoki, 1998).

The genus *Kunstella* is monotypical, and until the present moment it has been known to be distributed only in Mt. Gorny Altai, Southern Siberian region of Russia (Krivolutsky, 1974, 1995). However, the type species, *K. foveolata* is found in the desert habitats of southern Mongolia, which is the second distributional record for this genus.

The last genus, *Liebstadia* is rather rich in Mongolia in terms of species richness, representing by four species (Bayartogtokh, 2001). The author adds one more species, *Liebstadia pannonica*, not only to the fauna of Mongolia, but also in Asia, which has been known before only from Europe.

Materials and Methods

The present work is based on materials collected mostly by two our graduate students. Part of the material was collected from mountains Zuun Saikhan and Dund Saikhan in Gobi Gurvan Saikhan Nature Reserve area in the South Gobi Province, during the joint research conducting by the Faculty of Biology of the National University of Mongolia and the Faculty of Geography of the Philipps University of Marburg, Germany.

The other part of the study materials was collected from semidesert habitats in Mt. Ikh Gazryn Chuluu in the Middle Gobi Province, during field trip initiated by the Faculty of Biology, National University of Mongolia. In addition, some materials were collected from Mt. Bogdkhan, located close to the capital city Ulaanbaatar, and Mt. Khustai in Central Province.