

Two new species of scorpions (Scorpiones, Buthidae) of the genus *Paraorthochirus* Lourenço & Vachon from Oman

by Wilson R. Lourenço and Dietmar Huber

Abstract. The genus *Orthochirus* Karsch, 1891 has recently divided into four separate genera: *Orthochirus* (s. str.), *Paraorthochirus* (Lourenço & Vachon, 1995) from Iran, *Afghanorthochirus* (Lourenço & Vachon, 1997) from Afghanistan, and *Pakistanorthochirus* (Lourenço, 1997) from Pakistan. Four species were known to belong to the genus *Paraorthochirus*, and this paper describes two additional species new to science: *P. kinzelbachi* n.sp. and *P. kasparki* n.sp., both found in Oman. The description of the two new species provides further evidence to stabilise the generic characters of *Paraorthochirus*.

Kurzfassung. Die Arten der Skorpion-Gattung *Orthochirus* Karsch, 1891 wurden in neuerer Zeit in vier neue Gattungen aufgeteilt: *Orthochirus* (s. str.), *Paraorthochirus* (Lourenço & Vachon, 1995) aus dem Iran, *Afghanorthochirus* (Lourenço & Vachon, 1997) aus Afghanistan und *Pakistanorthochirus* (Lourenço, 1997) aus Pakistan. Aus der Gattung *Paraorthochirus* waren bisher vier Arten bekannt, und in dieser Arbeit werden zwei weitere Arten, die wissenschaftlich erstmals beschrieben werden, hinzugefügt: *P. kinzelbachi* n.sp. und *P. kasparki* n.sp., die beide im Oman gesammelt wurden. Die Beschreibung der beiden neuen Arten trägt zur Stabilisierung der generischen Charakteristika der Gattung *Paraorthochirus* bei.

Key words: Scorpiones, taxonomy, systematics, Oman, Middle East.

Introduction

Since its creation, the genus *Orthochirus* Karsch, 1891 has been in a state of confusion. It was first considered by KRAEPELIN (1899) to be a synonym to the genus *Butholus* Simon, 1883, but was later re-established by SIMON (1910) as a valid genus. Another point of indecision has been the precise composition of the species within the genus. A considerable number of species, subspecies and varieties have been described from the supposed area of distribution of the genus, which was originally considered to extend from the North of Africa to India (VACHON 1952). In more recent papers, VACHON (1966, 1979) demonstrated considerable hesitation as to the precise composition of the genus *Orthochirus*.

LOURENÇO & VACHON (1995) divided the genus *Orthochirus* into two, with the creation of a new genus, *Paraorthochirus*, and the description of two new species from the south of Iran. More recently (LOURENÇO & VACHON 1997) a second new genus, *Afghanorthochirus*, was created, along with the description of three new species from Afghanistan and Pakistan. A fourth species was also added to the genus *Paraorthochirus* from Pakistan. Finally, another new genus, *Pakistanorthochirus*, also associated with the genus *Orthochirus*, was described from Pakistan (LOURENÇO 1997). Two new species from Oman belonging to the genus *Paraorthochirus* are described below.