

Three new species of termite from Iran (Isoptera, Termitidae)

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Abstract. During a study of the Iranian termite fauna, specimens of the genera *Microcerotermes* Silvestri and *Amitermes* Silvestri were collected from different parts of Iran. Morphological studies revealed three new species: *Microcerotermes dashlibronensis* n. sp., *M. saravanensis* n. sp., and *Amitermes yasujensis* n. sp. which were found in Dashlibron (Golestan province), Saravan (Sistan & Baluchestan province) and Yasuj (Kohkiluyeh & Boyerahmad provinces). The new species are described and illustrated.

Kurzfassung. Im Zuge einer Untersuchung der iranischen Termitenfauna wurden Angehörige der Gattungen *Microcerotermes* Silvestri und *Amitermes* Silvestri in verschiedenen Landesteilen gesammelt. Bei morphologischen Untersuchungen wurden drei neue Arten festgestellt: *Microcerotermes dashlibronensis* n. sp., *M. saravanensis* n. sp. und *Amitermes yasujensis* n. sp. aus Dashlibron (Prov. Golestan), Saravan (Prov. Seistan & Belutschistan) bzw. Yasuj (Prov. Kohkiluyeh & Boyerahmad). Die neuen Arten werden beschrieben und abgebildet.

Key words. Termite, new species, Termitidae, *Amitermes*, *Microcerotermes*, Iran, Middle East.

Introduction

Several species of the termite genera *Microcerotermes* and *Amitermes* have been found in the countries adjacent to Iran: SILVESTRI (1920) described *Microcerotermes diversus* from Mesopotamia, AHMAD (1955) *M. longignatus*, *M. chaudhryi*, *M. lahorensis*, *M. maliki*, *M. pakistanicus*, *M. prochampioni*, *Amitermes belli*, and *A. pradentaus* from Pakistan, and CHHOTANI (1988) and CHHOTANI & BOSE (1979) *M. buettikeri*, *M. diversus*, *M. parvulus*, *A. vilis* and *A. gallegheri* from the Arabian Peninsula. Little is known about the termite fauna of Iran: WEIDNER (1955, 1960, 1984) reported *Anacanthotermes vagans*, *A. septentrionalis*, *A. vilis*, and *Microcerotermes gabrielis*, and HARRIS (1964) *A. vagans*. GHARIB (1975) described *M. diversus* as a pest of the date palm in the southern parts of Iran, and GHAYOURFAR & ESMALI (1991, 1993) reported *Amitermes stephensoni* and *Microcerotermes buettikeri* from Bushehr and Hormozgan provinces. GHAYOURFAR (2000) and GHAYOURFAR et al. (2000) reported *Anacanthotermes ahngerianus*, *A. vagans*, *A. turkestanicus* and *Reticulitermes lucifugus* from Iran.

Material and methods

During a study of the termite fauna of Iran, specimens of the genera *Microcerotermes* Silvestri and *Amitermes* Silvestri were collected from the Dashlibron, Saravan and Yasuj regions. Castes of soldiers and workers were collected from nests and covered run-ways. Specimens were pre-