

# Description of a new species of *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949 (Scorpiones: Buthidae) from southern Iran

by Valerio Vignoli

**Abstract.** A new species of *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949 is described; the specimen was collected near Persepolis in Fars Province, south-western Iran. *Compsobuthus petriolii* n. sp. belongs to the “*weneri*” group on the basis of the rows of denticles on the movable fingers, which appears as external accessory granules. The new species is of a slender appearance with particularly elongated pedipalp chelae, and is easy to distinguish from all congeneric taxa. Meristic data, drawings, and an identification key are provided.

**Kurzfassung.** Die hier beschriebene neue Art aus der Gattung *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949 wurde in der Nähe von Persepolis in der Fars-Provinz im Südwesten des Iran gefunden. *Compsobuthus petriolii* n. sp. lässt sich aufgrund der Dentikelreihen am *Digitus mobilis*, welche als externe akzessorische Granula erscheinen, der „*weneri*“-Gruppe zuordnen. Die neue Art besitzt einen schlanken Habitus mit auffallend verlängerten Pedipalpen-Scheren und ist somit leicht von allen anderen beschriebenen Arten dieser Gattung zu unterscheiden. Die vorliegende Arbeit enthält biometrische Daten, Zeichnungen sowie einen Bestimmungsschlüssel.

**Key words.** Scorpiones, *Compsobuthus petriolii* n. sp., systematics, Iran.

## Introduction

During a visit to the entomological fair of the Società Modenese di Entomologia in Modena (Italy), in May 2003, I obtained a dry preserved buthid. The specimen is in good condition and the label is accurate. It was immediately clear that it belonged to the genus *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949, which has a wide distribution which includes Africa, the Middle East and part of Asia, from Morocco to India (LEVY & AMITAI 1980, LOURENÇO 1999, FET & LOWE 2000). In 1973, the genus was split into two groups based on the presence of external accessory denticles on the pedipalp movable finger, “*weneri*” group, or the absence of external denticles, “*acutecarinatus*” group (LEVY et al. 1973). It is considered to be a “poorly studied” genus (SISSOM 1994, FET & LOWE 2000), and the probable reasons for the taxonomic confusion are both the morphological polymorphism and the inadequate, superficial descriptions without illustrations (SISSOM & FET 1998). Moreover, our limited knowledge of these scorpions could be due to the cryptic habits and probably narrow geographic ranges of several *Compsobuthus* species. Recent taxonomic updates confirm that knowledge of this genus is far from complete; there are 29 valid species of *Compsobuthus*, and 13 of these have been described only during the last five years (see KOVAŘÍK 2003: 106). In the present paper, a specimen of *Compsobuthus* with the typical morphological characters of the genus is analysed. In particular, the distinct carapace carinae have the median and posterior median carinae fused and finishing posteriorly with a projecting spiniform process (like the carinae of