

A contribution to the knowledge of *Hottentotta saulcyi* (Simon, 1880) (Scorpiones: Buthidae)

by Ayşegül Karataş and Muhammed Mouradi Gharkheloo

Abstract. 13 specimens (6 females and 7 males) of the rare and little-known scorpion *Hottentotta saulcyi* (Simon, 1880) were collected from Turkey, Iraq and Iran. Its morphological characteristics such as carinal and setal features are given, and these taxonomic properties were compared between the samples from western (Turkey and Iraq) and eastern (Iran) populations of *H. saulcyi*. Some morphological differences (e.g. trichobothrial features, morphometric measurements, carination of carapace, mesosoma, femur and patella, setation of pedipalp segments and tergites and colouration) were established between these two populations.

Kurzfassung. In dieser Arbeit wird über 13 Exemplare (6 Weibchen und 7 Männchen) der seltenen und wenig bekannten Skorpioart *Hottentotta saulcyi* (Simon, 1880) berichtet, die in der Türkei, im Irak und im Iran gesammelt wurden. Morphologische Eigenschaften wie Kielung und Behorung werden beschrieben, und diese Eigenschaften werden zwischen dem Westen (Türkei und Irak) und dem Osten (Iran) verglichen. Einige morphologische Unterschiede (z.B. Eigenschaften der Trichobothria, morphologische Maße, Kielung des Carapax, Mesosoma, Femur und Patella, Behorung der Pedipalpen- und Tergitsegmente, Färbung) konnten herausgearbeitet werden.

Key words. *Hottentotta saulcyi*, Buthidae, Iran, Iraq, Turkey.

Introduction

The genus *Hottentotta* of the scorpion family Buthidae, which is the only genus to have the tarsi with spines and the central median and posterior median carinae of carapace not arranged behind each other, includes almost 20 species and has a wide range in Africa and south-west Asia (FET et al. 2000). In the northern part of the Middle East (viz. Iran, Iraq and Turkey), it is represented by five species: *H. jayakari* (Pocock, 1895), *H. saulcyi* (Simon, 1880), *H. scaber* (Ehrenberg, 1828), *H. schach* (Birula, 1905), and *H. zagrosensis* Kovařík, 1997. Of these, *H. saulcyi* was first recorded in Mosul, Iraq (BIRULA 1918). FET et al. (2000) reported that the distribution of *H. saulcyi* extends over Iran, Iraq, and Syria, and KOVAŘÍK (1997) recorded the species in Afghanistan (one male specimen). Recently, it was found in the Mardin province in south-eastern Turkey (CRUCITTI & VIGNOLI 2002, KARATAŞ 2003). Studies on the distribution, morphology and ecology of the species are rare (BIRULA 1918, VACHON 1966, VACHON & STOCKMANN 1968, FET 1989, 1994, KOVAŘÍK 1992, 1997, FET et al. 2000, CRUCITTI & VIGNOLI 2002, KARATAŞ 2003, VIGNOLI et al. 2003).

This paper provides additional records of this poorly-known species from Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, and describes its morphological features including geographic variations in its morphometric measurements, carination, and setation.