

Publication

Aterigena, a new genus of funnel-web spider, shedding some light on the Tegenaria-Malthonica problem (Araneae, Agelenidae)

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Aterigena n. gen. is erected for four Palearctic species of funnel-web spiders previously placed in Tegenaria Latreille 1804 or Malthonica Simon 1898 (Agelenidae: Tegenariini) and A. aspromontensis n. sp., an Italian species described here. The following new combinations are proposed: Aterigena aculeata (Wang 1992), A. ligurica (Simon 1916), n. comb. (from Tegenaria), as well as A. aliquoi (Brignoli 1971) and A. soriculata (Simon 1873), n. comb. (from Malthonica). The latter two species were originally described in Tegenaria. The new genus is diagnosed by the unique combination of several morphological character states (e.g., notched trochanters III and IV, lateral spines on patellae, shape of vulvae). The monophyly of the new genus is also supported by a molecular analysis based on CO1 sequences of several taxa. Keys are provided for the identification of the recognized genera of Tegenariini and the species of Aterigena n. gen. Several species of Pseudotegenaria Caporiacco 1934, originally described in Tegenaria, are morphologically close to Tegenaria tridentina L. Koch 1872, a species that is grouped in the cladistic analysis using CO1 in the monophyletic taxon "Tegenaria clade 1". The species are therefore transferred back to Tegenaria as Tegenaria animata Kratochvíl & Miller 1940 stat. rev., T. bayeri Kratochvíl 1934 stat. rev., T. bosnica Kratochvíl & Miller 1940 stat. rev. and T. decolorata Kratochvíl & Miller 1940 stat. rev. Aterigena n. gen. has an interesting geographical distribution: it is widely disjunct in the Palearctic. Four species occur in the Mediterranean and one in China, respectively. A. ligurica is relatively widely distributed in mainland Italy and adjacent Southern France with a single specimen known each from Spain and Egypt (Alexandria), respectively. The latter may be the result of an accidental introduction. The other three European species are endemic to Sicily, Corsica (perhaps also Sardinia) and Calabria, respectively.

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