

***Colaxes insularis* (Peckham & Peckham, 1885) is a valid species of jumping spiders (Araneae: Salticidae: Ballinae)**

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ABSTRACT

Both sexes of *Homalattus insularis* Peckham & Peckham, 1885 are redescribed. The species is considered valid and it is transferred to the genus *Colaxes*: *Colaxes insularis* (Peckham & Peckham, 1885), n. comb.

KEYWORDS: Araneae, Salticidae, Afrotropics, Madagascar, jumping spiders, redescription, new combination.

RÉSUMÉ

Les deux sexes de *Homalattus insularis* Peckham & Peckham, 1885 sont redécrits. L'espèce est considérée comme valide et elle est transférée au genre *Colaxes*: *Colaxes insularis* (Peckham & Peckham, 1885), n. comb.

MOTS-CLÉS: Araneae, Salticidae, Madagascar, araignée sauteuse, région afro-tropicale, nouvelle combinaison.

INTRODUCTION

Peckham and Peckham (1885) described a few salticid species from Madagascar, among them *Homalattus insularis*. Although their description was quite detailed and illustrated, Roewer (1955) recognized this species as *nomen dubium* (nicht zu deuten!). This status has been upheld in the WSC (2019). However, syntypes of *Homalattus insularis* were found in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University (Cambridge, USA). A redescription of this species is presented here, the name is removed from *nomina dubia*, and the species is transferred to the genus *Colaxes*.

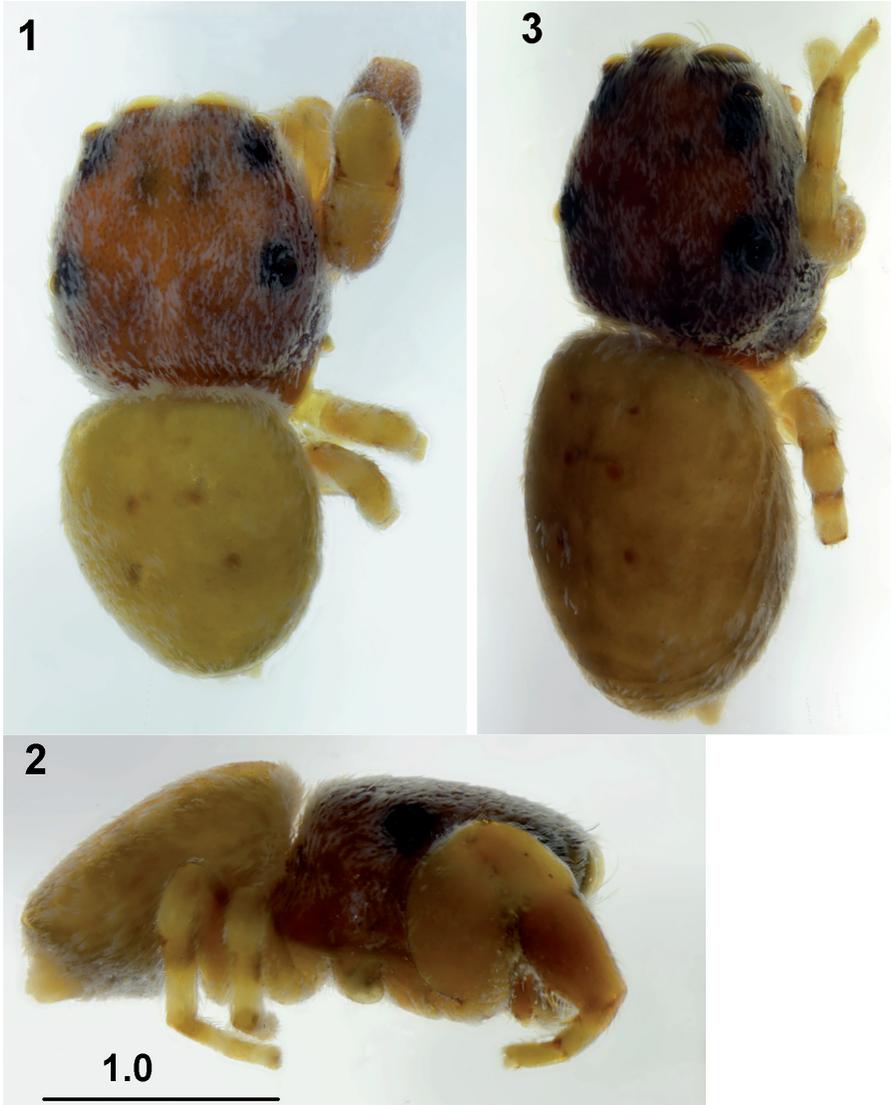
MATERIALS AND METHODS

The syntypes are kept in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University (Cambridge, USA).

Digital photographs were taken using a Nikon Coolpix camera mounted on a Nikon SMZ stereomicroscope and Helicon Focus 6.8.0 as a processing software. The drawings were made with the aid of a reticular eye-piece attached to stereomicroscope. All measurements and scale bars are given in millimetres.

TAXONOMYGenus *Colaxes* Simon, 1900*Colaxes insularis* (Peckham & Peckham, 1885), **n. comb.**

(Figs 1–12)

Homalattus insularis Peckham & Peckham, 1885: 29, figs 3, 3a.

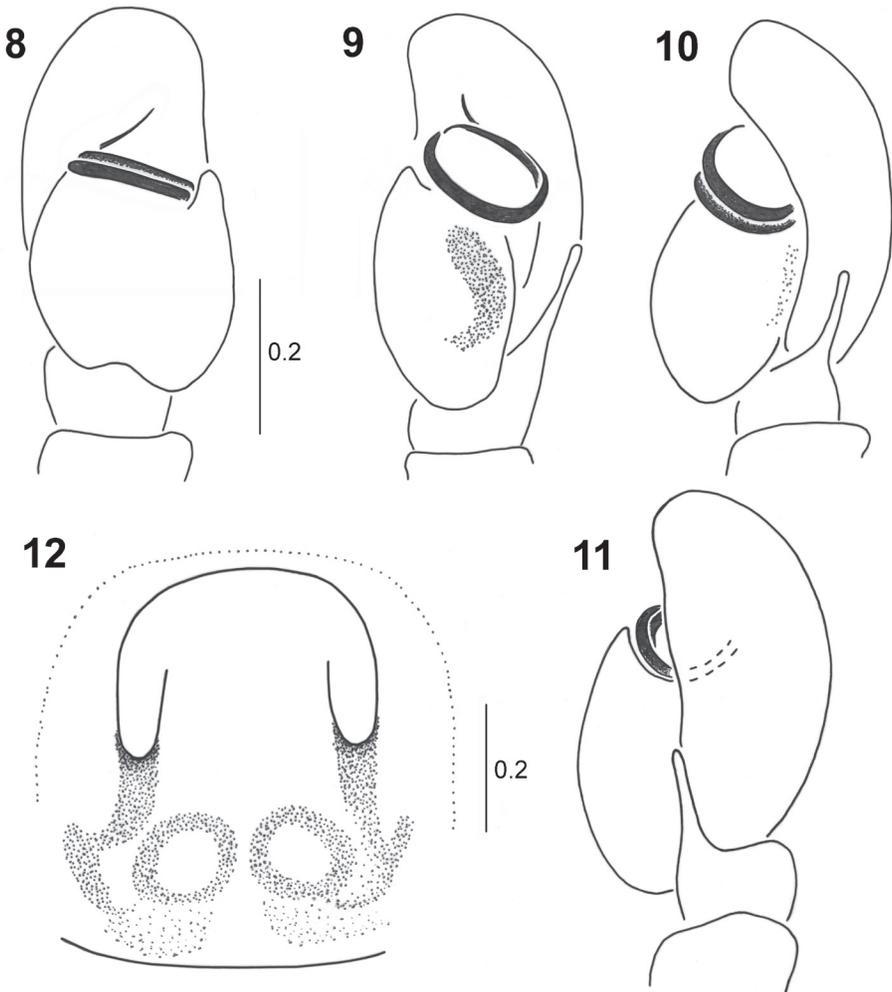
Figs 1–3: *Colaxes insularis*, habitus: (1) male, dorsal view; (2) male, lateral view; (3) female, dorsal view.

Diagnosis: The male of this species can be distinguished from other *Colaxes* spp. by having a very thin, needle-shaped tibial apophysis of the palpal organ, adhered to the cymbium, whereas in other species the apophysis is wider and bent out. The female has the epigyne without a median septum (present in congeners), copulatory openings that are located at the lateral sides of a central depression, with wide space between them, whereas in other species they are close to each other, separated by at most a narrow epigynal septum.



Figs 4–7: *Colaxes insularis*: (4) first leg of male; (5, 6) palpal organ, ventral (5) and retrolateral (6) views; (7) epigyne.

Redescription: Male. Measurements: Cephalothorax: length 1.2, width 1.1, height 0.7. Eye field: length 0.9, anterior width 0.8, posterior width 1.0. Abdomen: length 1.2, width 1.0. Small, squat spider, general appearance as in Figs 1, 2. Carapace ovoid, slightly longer than its width, with steep posterior thoracic slope. Coloration dark brown, vicinity of eyes black, two black patches in centre of eye field. Whole carapace clothed in dense white hairs, longer light bristles at eyes of first row. Clypeus low, with mat of white hairs. Sternum oval, brown; mouthparts brown. Chelicera with three small teeth on retromargin. Abdomen ovoid, dirty



Figs 8–12: *Colaxes insularis*, details of the copulatory organs: (8–11) palpal organ, ventral (8), ventrolateral (9, 10), and retrolateral (11) views; (12) epigyne.

yellow, covered with dense light hairs, sigilla clearly visible. Venter yellowish grey, spinnerets short, yellow. First pair of legs larger than others, their femora stout, tibiae swollen with two pairs of short thick ventral spines and single prolateral one placed distally (pattern 2-0-0-3, typical for *Colaxes*), metatarsus with two pairs of ventral spines (Fig. 4). Other legs yellowish brown, basal parts of segments darker. Legs with short light hairs. Pedipalps yellowish. Palpal tibia short, with long thin straight retrolateral apophysis (Figs 6, 9–11). Bulb bilobed, projecting outwards, embolus spirally coiled on bulb tip, coiling 2.5 times (Figs 5, 6, 8–11).

Female. Measurements: Cephalothorax: length 1.1, width 1.0, height 0.6. Eye field: length 0.8, anterior width 0.7, posterior width 1.0. Abdomen: length 1.5, width 1.0. Shape of body and coloration similar to male, abdomen a little longer, general appearance as in Fig. 3. First pair of legs as in male, but not so thick. Epigyne with shallow large depression centrally, copulatory openings placed in this depression laterally (Figs 7, 12). Vulva not examined (specimen poorly preserved), but copulatory canals (translucent through integument) probably form single loop.

Syntypes: 1♂ 1♀ **Madagascar:** labelled *Rhene insularis*, Peckhams' collection, nr 588, Museum of Comparative Zoology (Cambridge, USA), listed in the catalogue under no 21682 as syntypes of *Homalattus insularis*.

Distribution: Madagascar, precise locality unknown.

Remarks: *Colaxes* is a small genus of the Ballinae that hitherto includes only four species; three from south Asia (India, Sri Lanka) and a single African one. Members of this genus have a very stout first pair of legs, with enlarged femora and tibiae. The first tibia is armed with only two pairs of short but stout ventral spines and do not have scale-like hairs. The copulatory organs of *Colaxes insularis* are more similar to those in *C. benjamini* Wesołowska & Haddad, 2013 from South Africa than to the Asian species (Wesołowska & Haddad 2013: figs 44–48), so these two species are probably more closely related.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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