CENTIPEDE FAUNA OF NE STATES, INDIA
(CHILOPODA : SCOLOPENDROMORPHA)

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INTRODUCTION

The reconnoitirore of the available references of Pocock (1892/93), Kraepelin (1903), Attems (1906, 1930) Gravely (1910, 1912) and Silvestri (1924) reveal the record of 24 species of Scolopendrid centipedes from NE Region, including part of West Bengal and Sikkim, as also Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal. Of these, eleven species represent the present political boundaries of N. E. States, India.

The N. E. (North East) Region, at present, comprises the states of Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and part of West Bengal. The region is bounded on North by Tibet and China, East and South-East by Myanmar, on the North-West by Bhutan and Nepal, and on South by Bangladesh. The land of Bangladesh is, in fact, interspersed between West Bengal, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura and Mizoram.

The present paper deals with the Scolopendrid Centipedes collected from Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura States of N. E. Region, India, by the scientists of Eastern Regional Station, Zoological Survey of India, Shillong (Meghalaya) since 1960.

Presently, the author has recorded twenty species from the region. Combining the record of eleven species made prior to 1930 (as referred to above), the total number of species now known from the N. E. Region, India, has been raised to twenty four, which excludes the species recorded from Burma, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Of the present twenty four species, five constitute a new record from India (viz., O. ostigmus spinosus Porath, O. oweni Pocock, O. oatesi Kraepelin, O. proponens Chamberlin and
Rhysida stuhlmanni stuhlmanni Kraepelin); four a new record from the region (namely, *O. ceylonicus* Haase, *O. ruficeps* Pocock, *O. nudus* Pocock and *Cormocephalus dentipes* Pocock); eleven species are with their distributional ranges extended within the N. E. Region. The author has not come across any material of *Ethmostigmus pygomegas* (Kohlrausch) (previously known from West Bengal, Assam and Myanmar), *Cormocephalus pygmaeus* Pocock (previously known from West Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Lower Myanmar), *Cryptops kempi* Silvestri (Siju cave, Assam) and *Scolopendrel subspinipes dehaani* Brandt (from West Bengal, Assam, Myanmar and Bangladesh).

While listing the species from N. E. Region, the author has tried to include all the species hitherto known from N. E. Region. In addition, notes on the species occurring in adjacent countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal, have been incorporated under respective genera. Efforts have also been made to re-assign the localities reported by Gravely (1910 and 1912) and earlier workers to their present political boundaries.

### Systematic Account

**Phylum** : ARTHROPODA  
**Class** : CHILOPODA  
**Order** : SCOLOPENDROMORPHA  
**Family** : CRYPTOPTIDAE  
**Genus** : Paracryptops Pocock

1. **Paracryptops indicus** Silvestri, 1924


**Remarks** : Hitherto recorded only from Siju cave (Assam), the present report of the species from Meghalaya state merely extends the range of its distribution in NE Region.
Genus : Cryptops Leach

2. Cryptops sp. (doubtful)

The specimen is badly damaged and can not be assigned to any species.

3. Cryptops kempi Silvestri 1924


Remarks: No material of this species was available from the present lot. The species has hitherto been reported by Silvestri (1924) from Siju cave, Assam. The genus is also reported to be represented by Cryptops feae Pocock, Cryptops inermipes (Pocock) and Cryptops doriae Pocock from Myanmar (vide Gravely, 1910). The species C. doriae has recently been collected from Nanda Devi Biosphere reserve area (U. P.) and is being dealt with elsewhere by the author. But it may be mentioned here that the record of this species from U. P., hitherto known from Matheren (Maharashtra) and Myanmar, is of great zoo-geographical importance.

Family : SCOLOPENDRIDAE
Subfamily : SCOLOPEDRINAE
Tribe : SCOLOPENDRINI
Genus : Scolopendra Linnaeus

4. Scolopendra morsitans Linnaeus 1753


Remarks: The species is cosmopolitan in status with previous report from Dilkush, NE Cachar and Sibsagar (Assam) (vide Gravely 1910). The species is also known to be recorded from Myanmar and Bangladesh.

5. Scolopendra subspinipes dehaani Brandt 1840


Remarks: The author has not come across any example of this species from NE Region, but it is previously known to be recorded from Punkhabari, Darjeeling, Calcutta, Chinsura, Barrackpur, Serampur and Siliguri (West Bengal); Dilkush, Jatinga River and North Cachar Hills (Assam) and Lower Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Note: The genus *Scolopendra* is also known to be represented by *Scolopendra pinguis* Pocock, 1891 from Karen Berge (Myanmar) and Buitenzorg (Java).

Genus: Cormocephalus Newport

6. Cormocephalus dentipes Pocock 1691


Remarks: Originally described as species endemic to West Bengal, *Cormocephalus dentipes* Pocock, is now a well distributed species occurring widely in Meghalaya and Mizoram in NE Region. It has also been recorded from U. P. Terai (Khanna and Tripathi, 1985), Western Himalaya, U. P. (Khanna and Kumar, 1984 and Khanna, 1987), Himachal Pradesh (Khanna, unpublished record).

Distribution elsewhere: Bihar (Chhota Nagpur) and Delhi.
7. *Cormocephalus pygmaeus* Pocock 1892


**Remarks:** No material of this species is available in the present lot but it has earlier been recorded from Punkhabari, Darjeeling, Siliguri and Chakradharpur (West Bengal), Chhota Nagpur (Bihar), Cachar (Assam), Western Himalaya, U. P. and Rajasthan and also from Myanmar.

Subfamily: OTOSTIGMINAE  
Tribe: OTOSTIGMINI  
Genus: *Otostigmus* Porath

8. *Otostigmus ceylonicus* Haase, 1887


**Remarks:** Previously known from Himachal Pradesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, *O. ceylonicus* Haase, is being recorded for the first time, by the author, from Meghalaya states of NE Region, and is, therefore, of zoo-geographical interest.

9. *Otostigmus insularis* Haase, 1887


**Material examined:** India: Meghalaya; Khasi Hills, Ranikhor, 3 exs., 10. xii.1977,

Remarks: Previously known from Assam and West Bengal, the record of species from Meghalaya and Mizoram is, therefore, extension of range of its distribution in NE Region. The species is also known from Himachal Pradesh (Gravely, 1912).

Distribution elsewhere: Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Seycelles.

10. Otostigmus nudus Pocock 1890


Remarks: The species previously known from Tamilnadu (Pocock 1890) Himachal Pradesh (Khanna and Tripathi, 1986) and Uttar Pradesh (Khanna and Kumar 1984), is being recorded for the first time from NE Region, India.

11. Otostigmus oweni Pocock, 1892


Remarks: Previously known from Mergui Archipelago (Myanmar), this is the first record of the species *O. oweni* from Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya, in the NE Region, India.

12. Otostigmus oatesi Kraepelin, 1903

13. **Otostigmus proponens** Chamberlin, 1920


**Remarks**: Previously known from Solomon Island (Pacific ocean), this is, interestingly, a first record of the species from India, Manipur in the NE Region.

14. **Otostigmus politus** Karsch, 1881


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Remarks: Previously known from Darjeeling (West Bengal) and Dikrang and Sureil (Assam) in the NE Region, this is considered as further extension of distribution of this species in NE Region.

Distribution elsewhere: India (Himachal Pradesh, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh); Myanmar, China, Sumatra, New Guinea and Australia.

15. Otostigma rugulosus Porath, 1876


Remarks: Previously known from Sadiya and Mangaldai (Assam), this is the first record of this species from Khasi Hills (Meghalaya) after the lapse of about 82 years.

Distribution elsewhere: India (Himachal Pradesh and A & N Islands) and Myanmar (Mergui Archipelago).

16. Otostigma ruficeps Pocock, 1890


Remarks: Previously known from Tamilnadu (Pocock, 1890) and Lakhimpur Kheri (U. P.) (Khanna and Tripathi, 1985), the present record of this species from Meghalaya State NE Region constitute the first ever record from this part of India, and is of great zoogeographical interest.

17. Otostigmus spinosus Porath, 1876


Remarks: Previously known from Myanmar (Tennaserrim), Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi and New Guinea, this is the first record of the species from India, Meghalaya State.

Note: In the NE Region the genus *Otostigmus* Porath is also represented by species like *feae* Pocock, *morsitans* Pocock (both from Myanmar) and *scaber* Porath (from Myanmar, China and Thailand).

Genus: Rhysida Wood

18. *Rhysida africa cuprea* Kraepelin, 1903


**Remarks**: Previously known from Southern slopes of Bhutan and Sylhet (Bangladesh), *R. afra cuprea* Kraepelin was recorded by Gravely (1910) from Darjeeling and Ghumti (West Bengal) and Assam. The record of this species is, therefore, an extension of range of its distribution in the NE Region. In Western Himalaya, U. P. Khanna and Kumar (1984) and Khanna (1987) recorded this species from Almora and Pithoragarh dists., while Khanna and Tripathi (1985a) from Sirmaur (Himachal Pradesh).

**Note**: Gravely (1910) also recorded *R. afra petersi* (Porath) from Bhutan.

19. *Rhysida crassispina* Kraepelin, 1903


**Remarks**: Previously known from Matheren (Nr. Bombay, Maharashtra) the record of *R. crassispina* Kraepelin from Meghalaya, is interesting zoogeographically.

20. *Rhysida longipes longipes* (Newport), 1845


**Remarks**: Previously known from Lower Myanmar (Moulmein); West Bengal (Calcutta and Ranigunge), the finding of species from Arunachal Pradesh is undoubtedly an extension of range of its distribution.

21. *Rhysida nuda immarginata* (Porath), 1876

22. *Rhysida nudana* (Newport), 1845


*Remarks:* Earlier recorded from Myanmar (Pegu) the species was subsequently recorded by Gravely from Assam (Sadiya and Dibrugarh). This is, therefore, a further extension of range of distribution of this species in the NE Region.

23. *Rhysida stuhlmanni stuhlmanni* Kraepelin, 1903


*Remarks:* *Rhysida stuhlmanni* Kraepelin is by origin, an Ethiopean species, a subspecies of which has been described by Khanna (in press) from Western Himalaya, U. P., and simultaneously relegated the original species as *Rhysida stuhlmanni stuhlmanni* Kraepelin forma-typica.

The author has come across a single specimen of *R. s. stuhlmanni* from Meghalaya, and is, therefore, treated as a first record from India.
Genus: Ethmostigmus (Pocock)

The genus *Ethmostigmus* (Pocock) is known to be represented by the following species from NE Region but unfortunately the author has come across none of them in the present lot.

24. Ethmostigmus pygomegas (Kohlrausch), 1881


*Remarks*: The species is recorded from Darjeeling (West Bengal), Dikrang, Siliguri, Cachar and Sibsagar (Assam) and Myanmar.

In addition, *E. platycephalus* (Newport) and *E. spinosus* (Newport) have also been known from Myanmar.

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**SUMMARY**

The present paper deals with the Scolopendrid centipedes collected from North Eastern States of India, from Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura. Altogether twenty species have been recorded, five of which, viz., *Otostigmus oatesi* Kraepelin, *O. oweni* Pocock, *O. proponens* Chamberlin, *O. spinosus* Porath and *Rhysida stuhlmanni stuhlmanni* (Kraepelin), constitute a first record from India; four new record from NE Region, namely, *Otostigmus ceylonious Haase*, *O. ruficeps* Pocock, *O. nudus* Pocock, and *Cormocephalus dentipes* Pocock; eleven species are with
their distributional ranges extended within the NE Region. Combining the above records with earlier species known from the region, the number of species now known from NE States has been raised from eleven to twentyfour. *Ethmostigmus pygomegas* (Kohlrausch), *Cormocephalus pygmaeus* Pocock and *Scolopendra subspinipes dehaani* Brandt, known earlier from the region, have not been recorded in the present studies. Notes on the species occurring in the adjoining countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal, have been provided.

**REFERENCES**


