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### ***Short Communication***

## **DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF GIANT CRAB-SPIDER (ARANEAE : HETEROPODIDAE) FROM INDIA**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The spider of the family Heteropodidae are large in size with crab like legs for which they are recognized as Giant crab-spiders. The study of this group of spiders are not remarkable still. But some information on Indian forms provided by the previous workers like Simon (1864), Thorell (1895), Pocock (1900), Gravely (1931), Tikader (1960-1975) and Sethi & Tikader (1988). But they did not emphasis the internal structure of the genitalia which is most important identifiable species character.

We are fortunate enough to study the type of Heteropodid spider after collecting the specimen which still unknown to the science. The new species of the genus *Heteropoda* (Family : Heteropodidae) is described in this paper.

The type is deposited in the National Collection of the Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata-700 053.

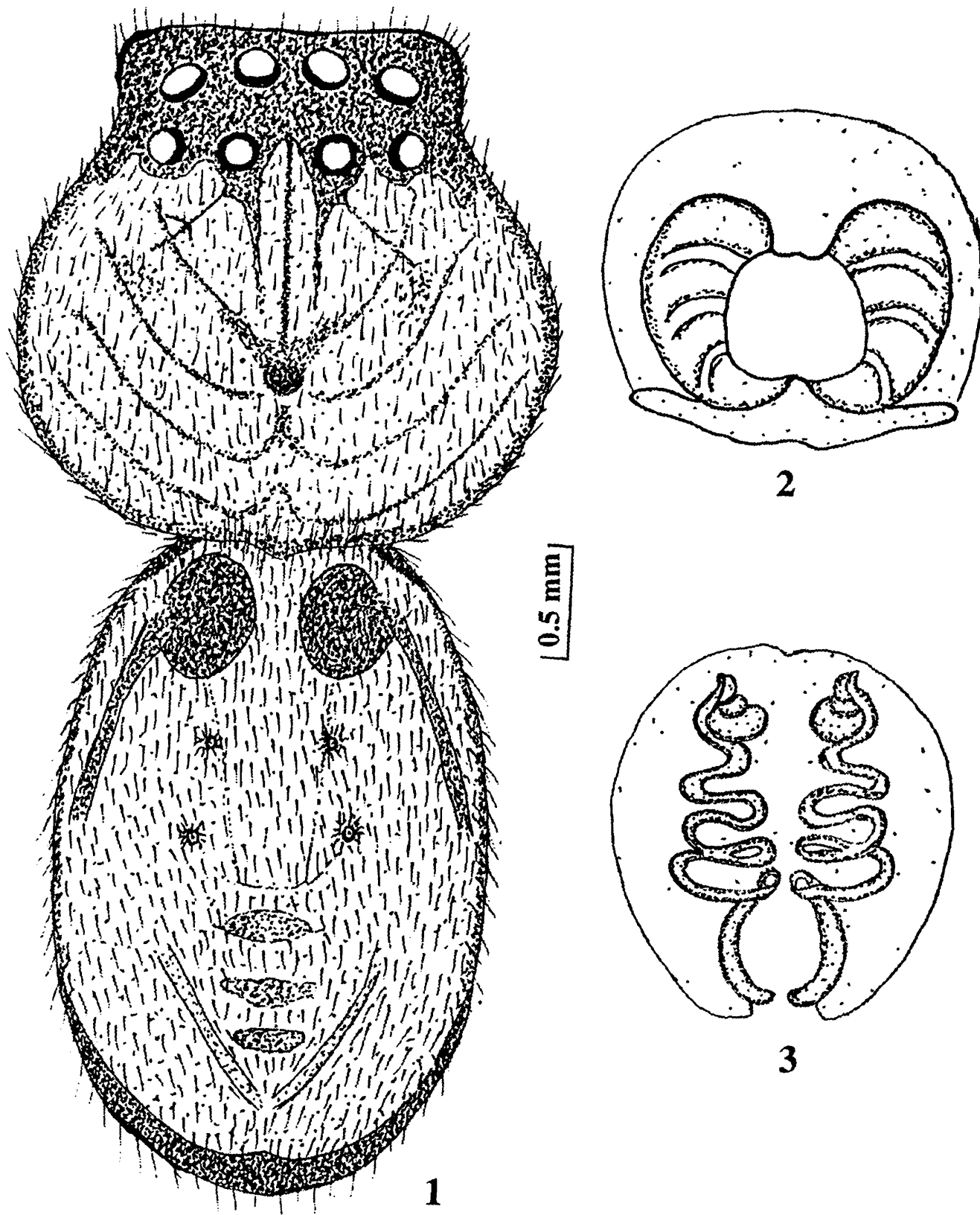
***Heteropoda debalae* sp. nov.**

(Figs. 1-3)

***General*** : Cephalothorax velvet like ash, abdomen velvet yellow with dense hair in both. Total length 21.00 mm. Carapace 11.00 mm long, 9.00 mm wide; abdomen 11.00 mm long, 7.00 mm wide.

***Cephalothorax*** : Cephalothorax giant in size, slightly longer than wide, cephalic region higher at the anterior end and elevated posteriorly. Two rows of distinct heterogenous eyes are present. Anterior row of eyes slightly procurved where as posterior slightly recurved in nature. Antero and postero median eyes are slightly longer than the laterals. There is distinct furrow originated from the posterior row of eyes to the base of fovea on the cephalic region. Chelicerae very strong, armed with two and four teeth on the outer and inner margins of fang furrow. Labium wider than long. Maxillae broad with thick scopulae. Sternum heart shaped, dark brown in colour. Legs long with alternative bands of yellow and black with hair. Leg formulae are 2143. Male unknown.

*Abdomen* : Elongated, tapering at the posterior end, clothed with dense hair. Dorsum with two black patches towards the anterior side and these continues upto posterior end of the dorsum through the margin of the abdomen. Two pairs of sigilla present. Extremely mature specimen with large shield shaped epigyne covered with dense hair (description based on living spider).



**Figs. 1-3.** : *Heteropoda debalae* sp. nov. 1. Dorsal view of female, Holotype (Legs are omitted); 2. Epigyne; 3. Internal genitalia.

*Type specimen* : Holotype female Paratype one female preserved in rectified spirit (70%).  
Registration number are 5577/18 and 5581/18.

*Type-locality* : Behala near Debalay at night from the room, Kolkata, India, 28.ix.2004, coll. A. Banerjee and Sagar Island proper near Omkarnath Ashram, Dist. South 24-Parganas, West Bengal (Sunderban), India, 20.viii.2005, coll. Rakhi Roy.

*Remarks* : *Heteropoda debalae* sp. nov. is compared with *H. venatoria* (Linn.) which differs in the following characters (1) The colouration of both the species totally different (2) Dorsum of the abdomen provided with two longitudinally black patches laterally in *H. debalae* sp. nov. but there is no such in *H. venatoria* (3) Epigyne and internal genitalia are also structurally different.

*Distribution* : Kolkata : Behala, India (Type locality); New record, Sagar Island (Sunderban).

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