



### Short Communication

## FIRST REPORT OF *THELYPHONUS SEPIARIS* (BUTLER, 1873) (ARACHNIDA: UROPYGI: THELYPHONIDAE) FROM CHHATTISGARH, CENTRAL INDIA

The Uropygids, commonly referred as "Whip-scorpions" are moderately sized, tough and striking predators. They are easily separated from scorpions by the presence of a deep constriction between the cephalothorax and abdomen, by the absence of pectines and presence of a long thin multi-segmented whip-like tail instead of a broadly segmented metasoma bearing a poison gland at the tip. These creatures are uncommon and inhabitants of damp places in forests and found under stone, bark, decomposing wood, leaf litter or debris. A few of them excavate burrows for protection of their young (Pocock, 1900). They possess anal glands that they use to spray a chemical to dissuade their predators (Eisner *et al.* 1961). This neglected group has been studied in the past by Rowland and Cooke (1973). The Uropygids are known by 19 species of 6 genera from Indian subcontinent while globally this group contains 103 species under 16 genera (Harvey 2002, 2003).

In India, the Uropygids are so far reported from Assam, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal (Pocock, 1900); Maharashtra (Bastawade, 1988); Andhra Pradesh (Javed *et al.*, 2009) and Madhya Pradesh (Talmale *et al.*, 2012).

During the course of faunistic survey in Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve (22° 15' to 22° 58' N Latitude and 81° 25' to 82° 5' E Longitude), dist Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh state in Central India, one example (male) of whip-scorpion was collected by Dr. Y.N.Gupta on 10<sup>th</sup> June from Jalda village near Chaprwa. The locality harbours southern tropical dry deciduous forest mixed with scrub.

On closer examination the specimen was diagnosed as *Thelyphonus sepiaris* (Butler, 1873). (Plate-I). (Registration No. ZSI/CZRC/A/13893).

This species is endemic to the Oriental region and has been reported earlier from Chennai (formerly Madras) Tamil Nadu and Jaffna and Trincomalee in Sri Lanka (Pocock, 1900). Recently Javed *et al.* (2009) have recorded it from different localities in Andhra Pradesh showing its extended distribution to the Eastern Ghats and Godavari river basin. The present record of this species from Central India indicates its wide range of distribution. The description of the specimen on hand perfectly matches with description provided for male by Javed *et al.* (2009) barring the number of segments of caudal flagellum (24 versus 33) and some other minor differences in measurements of body parts.



Fig.1 *Thelyphonus sepiaris* (Butler, 1873) (Arachnida: Uropygi: Thelyphonidae)

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