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Second Record of Onychophora (Peripatidae) in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

With the exception of the Malay Peninsula, onychophorans have only recently been reported from mainland Southeast Asia. Here we report the second record of an onychophoran from Vietnam.

KEY WORDS

Onychophora, Vietnam, Quang Ngai, Southeast Asia, Truong Son Mountains.

RESUMEN

Con la excepción de la Península de Malaca, recientemente los onicóforos han sido reportados solamente de la porción continental del Sudeste de Asia. Aquí presentamos el segundo registro de un onicóforo en Vietnam.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Onychophora, Vietnam, Quang Ngai, Sudeste de Asia, Montañas Truong Son.

Although onychophorans have long been known to occur on the Malay Peninsula (Poulton, 1899; Evans, 1901; van der Lande & Holthuis, 1986) and in Assam, India (Kemp, 1914), until recently they had otherwise not been reported from the mainland of Southeast Asia (Oliveira, Read & Mayer, 2012). Thai and Nguyen (2010) reported the first onychophoran from Vietnam, an unidentified *Eoperipatus* from Bau Sau Forest Station in Cat Tien National Park, Dong Nai Province. The Bau Sau Forest Station (11,459°N, 107,345°E) is in an area of lowland, tropical monsoon forest and sits at an altitude of <150m. Baer and Mayer (2012) reported an unidentified *Eoperipatus* from the Chanthaburi Mountains of Thailand.

On June 13th, 2012 during a herpetological survey in Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam, we found an onychophoran (Fig. 1) under a small rotten log. The collection site (14,621°N, 108,509°E) sits at an altitude of 1 055m on a ridge in the Truong Son (=Annamite) Mountains, within 400m of the Quang Ngai / Kon Tum provincial boundary. The vegetation is tropical, montane evergreen forest. This locality is approximately 370km north-north-east

from the Bau Sau locality and provides the first record of Onychophora from the Central Highlands of Vietnam. The locality is approximately 700km east-north-east from the locality in the Chanthaburi Mountains of Thailand.

The significance of this find was not fully understood at the time, and the specimen has apparently been lost. Hence, the only available information regarding coloration and morphology is what can be derived from photographs (Fig 1 and 2). The specimen has 22 pairs of legs. The genital opening lies between the penultimate pair of legs, confirming its placement in the family Peripatidae.

The dorsum is dark brown. The numerous papillae are either brown or yellow, the latter being most numerous along the sides just above the bases of the legs. A narrow, mid-dorsal, black line extends the length of the body. The ventral coloration is similar to that of the dorsum but paler. A mid-ventral light spot lies between each pair of legs except the penultimate and ultimate. The general coloration, mid-dorsal black stripe, and mid-ventral row of light spots are similar to the coloration reported for the previous Vietnamese specimen



FIG. 1. Dorsal view of onychophoran from Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam.

Color version of this photograph and the following, available at:
<http://investiga.uned.ac.cr/revistas/index.php/cuadernos/index>.



FIG. 2. Ventral view of onychophoran from Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam.

(Thai & Nguyen, 2010) and the Malayan species (Evans, 1901). Baer and Mayer (2012) provided no color notes for the Chanthaburi Mountain specimen.

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