

Description of a new species of *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949 (Scorpiones: Buthidae) from southern Iran

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Abstract. A new species of *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949 is described; the specimen was collected near Persepolis in Fars Province, south-western Iran. *Compsobuthus petriolii* n. sp. belongs to the “*weneri*” group on the basis of the rows of denticles on the movable fingers, which appears as external accessory granules. The new species is of a slender appearance with particularly elongated pedipalp chelae, and is easy to distinguish from all congeneric taxa. Meristic data, drawings, and an identification key are provided.

Kurzfassung. Die hier beschriebene neue Art aus der Gattung *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949 wurde in der Nähe von Persepolis in der Fars-Provinz im Südwesten des Iran gefunden. *Compsobuthus petriolii* n. sp. lässt sich aufgrund der Dentikelreihen am *Digitus mobilis*, welche als externe akzessorische Granula erscheinen, der „*weneri*“-Gruppe zuordnen. Die neue Art besitzt einen schlanken Habitus mit auffallend verlängerten Pedipalpen-Scheren und ist somit leicht von allen anderen beschriebenen Arten dieser Gattung zu unterscheiden. Die vorliegende Arbeit enthält biometrische Daten, Zeichnungen sowie einen Bestimmungsschlüssel.

Key words. Scorpiones, *Compsobuthus petriolii* n. sp., systematics, Iran.

Introduction

During a visit to the entomological fair of the Società Modenese di Entomologia in Modena (Italy), in May 2003, I obtained a dry preserved buthid. The specimen is in good condition and the label is accurate. It was immediately clear that it belonged to the genus *Compsobuthus* Vachon, 1949, which has a wide distribution which includes Africa, the Middle East and part of Asia, from Morocco to India (LEVY & AMITAI 1980, LOURENÇO 1999, FET & LOWE 2000). In 1973, the genus was split into two groups based on the presence of external accessory denticles on the pedipalp movable finger, “*weneri*” group, or the absence of external denticles, “*acutecarinatus*” group (LEVY et al. 1973). It is considered to be a “poorly studied” genus (SISSOM 1994, FET & LOWE 2000), and the probable reasons for the taxonomic confusion are both the morphological polymorphism and the inadequate, superficial descriptions without illustrations (SISSOM & FET 1998). Moreover, our limited knowledge of these scorpions could be due to the cryptic habits and probably narrow geographic ranges of several *Compsobuthus* species. Recent taxonomic updates confirm that knowledge of this genus is far from complete; there are 29 valid species of *Compsobuthus*, and 13 of these have been described only during the last five years (see KOVAŘÍK 2003: 106). In the present paper, a specimen of *Compsobuthus* with the typical morphological characters of the genus is analysed. In particular, the distinct carapace carinae have the median and posterior median carinae fused and finishing posteriorly with a projecting spiniform process (like the carinae of