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Article

An annotated checklist of the Chilopoda from Armenia

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Abstract
A comprehensive overview of the state of knowledge on the Chilopoda of Armenia is presented, based on a critical revision of all published records. The fauna under consideration consists of at least 25 nominal species, arranged in seven genera, five families, and three orders. The history of studies on the Chilopoda of Armenia is also summarized.

Key words biodiversity, Caucasus, centipedes, fauna, history of studies, Transcaucasia.

Introduction

Recently, lists of the Chilopoda from Georgia and Azerbaijan have been published (Kiria *et al*. 2023, 2024; Dyachkov 2024), while a list of the corresponding fauna of Armenia is still missing. Data on the Chilopoda fauna of this country are scattered across various old publications and have never been summarized.

The first record of centipedes from Armenia was published by Sseliwanoff (1879), who described *Bothriogaster affinis* Sseliwanoff, 1879 from two localities, including "Etchmiadsin" (now Vagharshapat city, Armenia). He also described *Geophilus transmontanus* Sseliwanoff, 1884 (Sseliwanoff 1881b, 1881b, 1884) from three localities, including Elenovka (now Sevan City) and *Lithobius portchinskii* Sseliwanoff, 1881 from four localities, including "Daratshagas" (now Tsaghkadzor). Later, Daday (1894) described *Scolopendra morsitans multispinosa* Daday, 1894 from Erevan.

Muralewicz (1907, 1926, 1929) made a significant contribution to the study of chilopods of the Caucasus. He recorded a number of chilopod species in Armenia: *Geophilus flavidus setosus* Lignau, 1903, *G. flavidus polytrichus* Attems, 1903, *G. transmontanus*, *Bothriogaster affinis*, *Lithobius aeruginosus* L. Koch, 1862, *L. asper* Muralewicz, 1926, *L. coloratus* Sseliwanoff, 1881, *L. curtipes* C.L. Koch, 1847, *L. erythrocephalus* C. Koch, 1847, *L. forficatus* (Linnaeus, 1758), *L. kessleri* Sseliwanoff, 1881, *L. oblongus* Sseliwanoff, 1881, *L. piceus caucasica* Attems, 1907, *L. portchinskii* Sseliwanoff, 1881, *L. pusillus* Latzel, 1880, *L. viriatus* Sseliwanoff, 1880, and *Scolopendra aralocaspia* Kessler,

1876 (now *S. canidens* Newport, 1844). Later, *Lithobius piceus caucasica* was synonymized under *L. piceus* L. Koch, 1862 by Matic & Darabantu (1968) and Titova (1969) mentioned *Bothriogaster affinis* from Armenia.

Several decades later, Zalesskaja (1972, 1976, 1978) contributed to the study of Caucasian Lithobiomorpha. She recorded numerous species from Armenia: *Hessebius kosswigii* Zalesskaja 1978, *Lithobius asper, L. asper laeviceps* Zalesskaja 1973, *L. aeruginosus, L. cronebergii* Sseliwanoff, 1881, *L. erythrocephalus*, *L. ferganensis tridens* (Trotzina, 1894), *L. illyricus* Latzel, 1880, *L. lucifugus* L. Koch, 1862, *L. piceus*, *L. pusillus*, *L. sectilis* Zalesskaja, 1976, *L. sseliwanoffi* Garbowski, 1897, *L. turkestanicus* Attems, 1904. She also regarded specimens from Caucasus identified as *Lithobius curtipes* by Muralewicz as belonging to *L. pusillus* Sseliwanoff, 1878. Later, Zalesskaja *et al*. (1982) recorded *Pachymerium ferrugineum* (C.L. Koch, 1835) and Zalesskaja & Schileyko (1991, 1992) recorded *Cryptops hortensis* (Donovan, 1810) and *Scolopendra canidens* from Armenia.

Subsequently, some of the above-mentioned species were recognized as junior synonyms of different species (Koren 1992; Eason 1997; Zapparoli 1988, 1999, 2002; Bonato & Minelli 2014).

This paper aims to provide an annotated checklist of Chilopoda from Armenia.

Material and methods

I searched the entire taxonomic and faunistic literature, to the best of my abilities, to retrieve all occurrence records of Chilopoda from Armenia. Taxonomy follows Bonato (2011), Edgecombe (2011), Edgecombe & Bonato (2011), Zapparoli & Edgecombe (2011), and Bonato *et al*. (2016).

Families, genera within families, and species within genera are listed alphabetically. Map was generated using SimpleMappr (Shorthouse 2010). I referred the occurrence records to modern administrative units (Fig. 1).

List of localities.

Erevan City:
[1] – “Erivan” [city, N40°11', E44°30'] (Daday 1894).

Gegharkunik Province:
[2] – “Elenovka, bereg Zangi” or “Elenovka” [Elenovka Village, Zange River bank, now Sevan City, N40°32', E44°58'] (Muralewicz 1929);
[3] – Sevan [lake, N40°28', E45°07'] (Zalesskaja 1972);
[4] – “Sevanavank monastery” [N40°33'46", E45°0'38"] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929);
[5] – “Allagelar” [Mountain, N40°28', E45°30'] (Muralewicz 1929);

Kotayk Province:
[6] – “Darachigas” (Sseliwanoff 1881a) or “Daratschitschag” (Muralewicz 1907) [Tsaghkadzor, N40°31'51", E44°43'18"].

Shirak Province:
[7] – “Alexandropol” (Muralewicz 1929) or “Leninakan” (Zalesskaja 1972) [now Gyumri City, N40°46', E43°50'].

Ararat Province:
[8] – “Khosrovsky Reserve” [Khosrov Forest State Reserve, N40°2', E44°55'] (Zalesskaja 1976).
[9] – “Gegart” [Geghard monastery, N40°8', E44°49'] (Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1992).
Armavir Province:
[10] – “Etchmiadsin” [now Vagharshapat city, N40°9', E44°17'] (Sseliwanoff 1879).

Uncertain localities:
[?11] – “Khachik Mountain” [there is Khachik Village, Vayots Dzor Province, N39°37', E45°12', but location of “Khachik Mountain” is still uncertain] (Muralewicz 1929).
[?12; absent in Fig. 1] – “v gorah ha Hagare” (Muralewicz 1929) or “Armenia, Chagare” (Golovatch *et al*. 2022).

Figure 1. Distribution map of the centipede species records in Armenia, based on literature data. For codes see Material and methods.

Results

List of the species

Order Geophilomorpha Pocock, 1896

Family Geophilidae Leach, 1816

Genus *Clinopodes* C.L. Koch, 1847

1. ***Clinopodes flavidus* C.L. Koch, 1847**

Geophilus flavidus – Muralewicz 1907: 338.
Geophilus flavidus setosus – Muralewicz 1926: 43.
Clinopodes flavidus setosus – Bonato *et al*. 2011: 199.
Geophilus flavidus polytrichus – Muralewicz 1926: 43.

Previous records. Shirak Province: [7] (Muralewicz 1907), [7] (Muralewicz 1926, as *G. flavidus setosus* and *G. flavidus polytrichus*).

Distribution. Europe and Caucasus (Bonato *et al*. 2011).

Remarks. *Geophilus flavidus polytrichus* was synonymized under *Clinopodes flavidus* by Zapparoli (2002). According to Bonato *et al*. (2011) further research is needed to establish a reliable intraspecific taxonomy for this species and distinguish a subspecies *C. flavidus setosus*.

2. ***Clinopodes caucasicus*** **(Sseliwanoff, 1884)**

Geophilus transmontanus Sseliwanoff 1881b: 6; 1884: 85.
Geophilus transmontanus – Muralewicz 1907: 338.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] (Sseliwanoff 1881b, 1884; Muralewicz 1907, as *Geophilus transmontanus*).

Distribution. Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia (Bonato *et al*. 2011; Dyachkov *et al*. 2022b).

Genus *Pachymerium* C.L. Koch, 1847

3. ***Pachymerium ferrugineum*** **(C.L. Koch, 1835)**

Pachymerium ferrugineum – Zalesskaja *et al*. 1982: 187.

Previous records. Armenia (Zalesskaja *et al*. 1982).

Distribution. A trans-Palaearctic species (Dyachkov 2024).

Remarks. The precise distribution in Armenia is unknown.

Family Himantariidae Bollman, 1893

Genus *Bothriogaster* Sseliwanoff, 1879

4. ***Bothriogaster signata*** **(Kessler, 1874)**

Bothriogaster affinis – Sseliwanoff 1879: 621; Muralewicz 1907: 339; Titova 1969: 165.

Previous records. Armavir Province: [10] (Sseliwanoff 1879; Muralewicz 1907).

Distribution. A Turano-Mediterranean species (Simaiakis *et al*. 2013; Zarei *et al*. 2020).

Remarks. *B. affinis* was synonymized under *B. signata* by Bonato & Minelli (2014).

Order Lithobiomorpha Pocock, 1895

Family Lithobiidae Newport, 1844

Genus *Hessebius* Verhoeff, 1941

5. ***Hessebius barbipes*** **(Porat, 1893)**

? *Hessebius kosswigii* – Zalesskaja 1978: 50; Zapparoli 1999: 132.

Previous records. Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978).

Distribution. From SE Europe, N Africa (Egypt) to SW Asia (Simaiakis *et al*. 2013) and Middle Asia (Turkmenistan) (Dyachkov *et al*. 2022a).

Remarks. The precise distribution in Armenia is unknown.

According to Zapparoli (1999), *H. kosswigii* is putative junior synonym of *H. barbipes* (listed above with a question mark); probable but uncertain synonymy (Bonato *et al*. 2016).

Genus *Lithobius* Leach, 1814

6. ***Lithobius aeruginosus*** **L. Koch, 1862**

Monotarsobius aeruginosus – Muralewicz 1926: 28; 1929: 14; Zalesskaja 1978: 182.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929), Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978).

Distribution. Europe, Caucasus, and Iran (Zalesskaja 1978; Zarei *et al*. 2020; Kiria *et al*. 2023).

7. ***Lithobius asper*** **Muralewicz, 1926**

Lithobius asper – Muralewicz 1929: 53; Zalesskaja 1972: 129; Golovatch *et al*. 2022: 95.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] (Muralewicz 1929) and [3] (Zalesskaja 1972).
Distribution. Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978).

8. ***Lithobius asper laeviceps*** **Zalesskaja 1973**

Lithobius asper laeviceps – Zalesskaja 1978: 113.
Lithobius oblongus laeviceps Zalesskaja 1973: 137.
Lithobius oblongus laeviceps – Zalesskaja 1978: 113.

Previous records. Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978).
Distribution. Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978; Turbanov *et al*. 2016; Dyachkov 2024).

9. ***Lithobius coloratus*** **Sseliwanoff, 1881**

Lithobius coloratus – Muralewicz 1926: 33; 1929: 63.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929).
Distribution. Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978).

10. ***Lithobius cronebergii*** **Sseliwanoff, 1881**

Lithobius cronebergii – Zalesskaja 1972: 129.

Previous records. Shirak Province: [7] (Zalesskaja 1972).
Distribution. Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978).

11. ***Lithobius erythrocephalus*** **C. Koch, 1847**

Lithobius erythrocephalus – Muralewicz 1926: 29; 1929: 32; Zalesskaja 1978: 135; Zalesskaja *et al*. 1982: 196.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929), Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978; Zalesskaja *et al*. 1982).
Distribution. Europe and Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978).

12. ***Lithobius ferganensis tridens*** **Muralewicz, 1926**

Lithobius ferganensis tridens Muralewicz 1926: 31.
Lithobius ferganensis tridens – Zalesskaja 1972: 129; Golovatch *et al*. 2022: 96.

Previous records. Uncertain locality: [?12] (Muralewicz 1929).
Distribution. Armenia (Zalesskaja 1972).
Remarks. Original description (Muralewicz 1926) does not contain any information on the type locality. This species is also described in Muralewicz (1929).

13. ***Lithobius forficatus*** **(Linnaeus, 1758)**

Lithobius forficatus – Muralewicz 1926: 34; 1929: 72.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [4] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929).

Distribution. N and S America, Greenland, Europe, W Siberia, Mongolia, and Japan (Zalesskaja 1978; Tuf *et al*. 2015; Hirakizawa & Yamauchi 2021).

14. ***Lithobius illyricus*** **Latzel, 1880**

Lithobius illyricus – Zalesskaja 1972: 129.

Previous records. Shirak Province: [8] (Zalesskaja 1972).

Distribution. Europe and Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978).

Remarks. According to Bonato *et al*. (2016), *L. illyricus* is a junior synonym of *L. erythrocephalus* (Stagl & Zapparoli 2006), but in accordance with latter source, *L. illyricus* is a valid species.

15. ***Lithobius kessleri*** **Sseliwanoff, 1881**

Lithobius kessleri – Muralewicz 1926: 33; 1929: 56.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] and [5] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929).

Distribution. Caucasus and Crimea (Zalesskaja 1978; Kiria *et al*. 2023).

16. ***Lithobius lapidicola*** **Meinert, 1872**

Lithobius pusillus – Muralewicz 1907: 334; 1926: 34; 1929: 39; Zalesskaja 1972: 129.

Previous records. Shirak Province: [7] (Muralewicz 1907, 1926, 1929; Zalesskaja 1972, as *L. pusillus*).

Distribution. Europe, Caucasus (Kiria *et al*. 2023).

Remarks. *L. pusillus* was synonymized under *L. lapidicola* by Koren (1992: 113).

17. ***Lithobius lucifugus*** **L. Koch, 1862**

Lithobius lucifugus – Zalesskaja 1972: 129.

Previous records. Shirak Province: [7] (Zalesskaja 1972).

Distribution. Europe, synanthropic in W Siberia (Zalesskaja 1978; Dyachkov *et al*. 2022a).

18. ***Lithobius piceus*** **L. Koch, 1862**

Lithobius piceus caucasica Muralewicz 1926: 33.
Lithobius piceus caucasica – Muralewicz 1929: 68; Matic & Darabantu 1968: 108.
Lithobius piceus – Zalesskaja 1978: 78.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929), Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978).

Distribution. Europe and Caucasus (Dyachkov & Zuev 2023; Kiria *et al*. 2023).

Remarks. *L. piceus caucasica* was synonymized under *L. piceus* by Matic & Darabantu (1968).

19. ***Lithobius portchinskii*** **Sseliwanoff, 1881**

Lithobius portchinskii Sseliwanoff 1881a: 181.
Lithobius porcinskii – Muralewicz 1929: 60.

Previous records. Kotayk: [6] (Sseliwanoff 1881a; Muralewicz 1907) and Shirak: [7] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929) provinces.

Distribution. Caucasus (Kiria *et al*. 2023).

20. ***Lithobius sectilis* Zalesskaja, 1976**

Monotarsobius sectilis Zalesskaja 1976: 608.
Monotarsobius sectilis – Zalesskaja 1978: 186.

Previous records. Ararat Province: [8] (Zalesskaja 1976).

Distribution. Caucasus (Dyachkov 2024).

21. ***Lithobius sseliwanoffi* Garbowski, 1897**

Monotarsobius sseliwanoffi – Zalesskaja 1978: 164; Zalesskaja *et al*. 1982: 197.
(see below) *Monotarsobius curtipes* – Muralewicz 1907: 334; 1926: 29; 1929: 15.

Previous records. Gegharkunik: [2] and Shirak: [7] (Muralewicz 1907, 1926, 1929, as *L. curtipes*) provinces, Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978; Zalesskaja *et al*. 1982).

Distribution. Southern Europe (Zalesskaja & Golovatch 1996) and Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978).

Remarks. According to Zalesskaja (1978: 178), specimens identified as *Monotarsobius curtipes* by Muralewicz belong to *Lithobius pusillus* Sseliwanoff, 1878. Latter species was regarded as a junior synonym of *L. sseliwanoffi* Garbowski, 1897 (Garbowski 1897), but Eason (1972) and Zalesskaja (1978) offered to consider some specimens of *L. curtipes* as *L. sseliwanoffi*. Later, *L. sseliwanoffi* was synonymized under *L. ferganensis* by Eason (1997), but it was questioned by Farzalieva (2006).

22. ***Lithobius turkestanicus* Attems, 1904**

Monotarsobius turkestanicus – Zalesskaja 1978: 165.

Previous records. Armenia (Zalesskaja 1978).

Distribution. Caucasus (Zalesskaja 1978), Iran (as *L. ferganensis*, Zarei *et al*. 2020), and Middle Asia (Dyachkov *et al*. 2022a).

Remarks. *L. turkestanicus* was synonymized under *L. ferganensis* by Eason (1997), but it was questioned by Farzalieva (2006).

23. ***Lithobius viriatus* Sseliwanoff, 1880 2**

Lithobius viriatus – Muralewicz 1926: 35; 1929: 82.
Lithobius oblongus – Muralewicz 1926: 33; 1929: 61; Zalesskaja 1972: 129.

Previous records. Gegharkunik Province: [2] and [4] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929), [4] (Muralewicz 1926, 1929, as *L. oblongus*) and [3], Shirak Province: [7] (Zalesskaja 1972, as *L. oblongus*).

Distribution. Eastern Mediterranean Region (Dyachkov *et al*. 2022b; Kiria *et al*. 2023).

Remarks. *L. oblongus* was synonymized under *L. viriatus* by Zapparoli (1988).

Order Scolopendromorpha Pocock, 1895

Family Cryptopidae Kohlrausch, 1881

Genus *Cryptops* Leach, 1815

24. ***Cryptops hortensis* (Donovan, 1810)**

Cryptops hortensis – Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1992: 371.

Previous records. Armenia (Lewis 2011; Kiria *et al*. 2021).

Distribution. A Turano-Euro-Mediterranean species (Dyachkov 2024).
Remarks. The precise distribution in Armenia is unknown.

Family Scolopendridae Leach, 1814

Genus *Scolopendra* Linnaeus, 1758

25. ***Scolopendra canidens* Newport, 1844**

Scolopendra morsitans multispinosa Daday 1894: 111.
Scolopendra morsitans multispinosa – Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1991: 4; 1992: 368.
Scolopendra aralocaspia – Muralewicz 1907: 338.
Scolopendra canidens – Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1992: 368.

Previous records. Erevan City: [1] (Daday 1894, as *S. morsitans multispinosa*), Ararat Province: [9] (Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1992), and uncertain locality: [?11] (Muralewicz 1907, as *S. aralocaspia*).
Distribution. Mostly the Turano-Mediterranean Region (Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1991, 1992).
Remarks. *S. aralocaspia* was synonymized under *S. canidens* by Kraepelin (1903). *S. morsitans multispinosa* is also junior synonym of *S. canidens* (Zalesskaja & Schileyko 1991, 1992).

Conclusions

The published records of Chilopoda from Armenia refer to at least 25 nominal species, arranged in seven genera, five families, and three orders.

Species with the Caucasian distribution pattern (7 species, 28% of the fauna) dominate the fauna of Armenia. Additionally, there are species with Euro-Caucasian (6 species, 24%), as well as Caucasian subendemic, Turano-Mediterranean, and Eastern-Mediterranean distribution patterns (each represented by 2 species, or 8%). Each of the remaining distribution patterns (Cosmopolitan, Trans-Palaearctic, European, Europe-Western Asian, Turano-Euro-Mediterranean, and Western-Middle Asian) is represented by just a single member (each accounting for 4% of the fauna). Seven species are endemic to the Caucasus: *Lithobius asper*, *L. asper laeviceps*, *L. coloratus*, *L. cronebergii*, *L. ferganensis tridens*, *L. portchinskii*, and *L. sectilis*.

The precise distribution in Armenia is unknown for *Pachymerium ferrugineum* (Geophilomorpha), *Hessebius barbipes*, *Lithobius asper laeviceps*, *L. turkestanicus* (Lithobiomorpha), and *Cryptops hortensis* (Scolopendromorpha). *Lithobius ferganensis tridens* is recorded in an uncertain locality in Armenia.

Bonato *et al*. (2016) mentioned the presence of *Arebius* (*Pagobius*) *kochii* (Stuxberg, 1875), *Escaryus koreanus* Takakuwa, 1937, *Lithobius punctulatus* C.L. Koch, 1847, and *Scolopendra subspinipes piceoflava* Attems, 1934 in Armenia. However, there is no data on occurrence of these species in this country.

Additional research of Chilopoda from Armenia is still necessary.

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