

Identification of Scorpion Species (Arachnida: Scorpiones) Collected From Selected

Areas in the Jaffna Peninsula

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Taxonomic record on scorpion (Arthropoda: Arachnida: Scorpiones) is scarce in Sri Lanka. Several families of scorpions, namely Scorpionidae, Charilidae and Buthidae were recorded in Yala national park, Kandy, Trincomalee and Mullaivivu in Sri Lanka, based on the collection of the Natural History Museum of the city of Geneva. It is reported that dangerous scorpions are not found in Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Recently identified scorpions of Family Buthidae in some parts of India. But to date no one has reported on scorpion species of Families Buthidae & Scorpionidae in the Jaffna peninsula.

Field collection was carried out in selected areas including Vadamarachi, Atchavelly, Thirunelveli, Kopay and Kondavil in the Nonhern Province from September 2010 to March 2011. Collected scorpions were identified with the help of descriptions and illustrations provided by Pocock (1900) and Bucherl (1971). Identification was performed with the aid of dissecting microscope (Kyowa, $\times 20$, $\times 40$). Photographs of life specimens were taken with a digital camera (Sony). Lined diagrams were drawn with the help of camera lucida stereo microscope (Olympus BX 51). Descriptive terms of Pocock were mostly followed. Two families, namely, Buthidae and Scorpionidae (Koch, 1837) were identified based on colouration, shape of the sternum, tarsal spur and pedal spur present on the leg. Further identification revealed the presence of two species, namely, *Buthus doriae* and *Palamnaeus wrongtoni* based on pectinal teeth and keels on the caudal segment. The present preliminary survey should be continued in order to identify any other scorpion species in other parts of the Jaffna peninsula.

Key words: Arachnida, Scorpiones, *Buthus*, *Palamnaeus*