

FIRST RECORD OF THE FAMILY CITHAERONIDAE SIMON (ARACHNIDA, ARANEAE) FROM CUBA, IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION

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ABSTRACT

The species *Cithaeron praedonius* O. P.-Cambridge is recorded from eastern Cuba. This is the first record of the family Cithaeronidae in the Caribbean Region. The presence in Cuba of this species is an accidental introduction, but its source is unknown.

Key words: Cithaeronidae, new record, Cuba, Caribbean.

Título: Primer registro de la familia Cithaeronidae Simon (Arachnida, Araneae) para Cuba, en la Región del Caribe.

RESUMEN

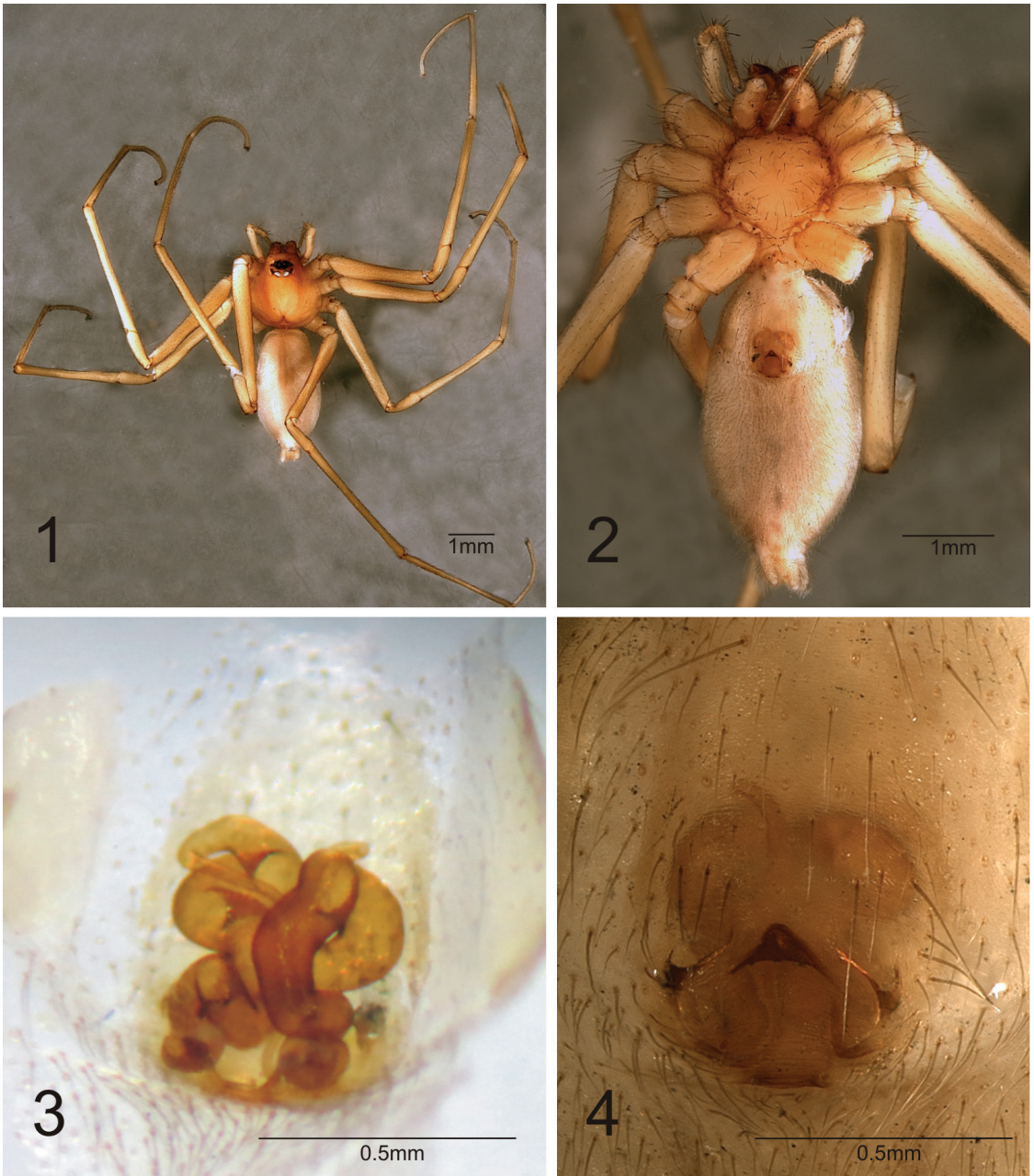
La especie *Cithaeron praedonius* O. P.-Cambridge es registrada para el Este de Cuba. Este es el primer registro de la familia Cithaeronidae en la Región del Caribe. La presencia en Cuba de esta especie se considera una introducción accidental, su fuente es desconocida.

Palabras clave: Cithaeronidae, nuevo registro, Cuba, Caribe.

Cithaeronidae are fast moving spiders which hunt actively at night. They are included in the superfamily Gnaphosoidea, together with Ammoxenidae, Gallieniellidae, Trochanteriidae, Prodidomidae, Lamponidae and Gnaphosidae (Platnick, 1990; 2002). The family was revised by Platnick (1991) recognizing a total of five species in two genera (*Cithaeron* O. P.-Cambridge, 1872 and *Intheron* Platnick, 1991). Afterwards two species were described: *Cithaeron indicus* Platnick & Gajbe, 1994 and *Cithaeron contentum* Jocqué & Russell-Smith, 2011 from India and South Africa respectively. While *Intheron* occurs only in India, members of the genus *Cithaeron* can be found in Africa, Greece, Iran, Turkmenistan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Turkey, India, Malaysia, Australia Brazil and USA (Platnick & Gajbe, 1994; Carvalho *et al.*, 2007; Edwards & Stiles, 2011; Akpınar & Varol, 2012; Platnick, 2013).

We present here the first record of a Cithaeronidae species from the Caribbean Region. During a field trip in the Ecological Reserve Siboney-Juticí located in southeastern Cuba, approximately 10 km southeast of Santiago de Cuba city, two adult females of *C. praedonius* O. P.-Cambridge were captured (Figs. 1-4). The specimens were located at night under rocks of medium size around the Field Station Emil Racovitza (19°57'40.032" N-75°42'54.556" W) in the Protected Area. Specimens were deposited in the Arachnida collections of Instituto Butantan, São Paulo (IBSP 163682) and Centro Oriental de Ecosistemas y Biodiversidad, Santiago de Cuba (BSC-AR433).

Carvalho *et al.* (2007) and Edwards & Stiles (2011), who recorded the species from the New World, considered the presence of *C. praedonius* in Brazil and USA as accidental



Figures 1-4. *Cithaeron praedonius* O.P.-Cambridge, female (IBSP 163682) from Field Station Emil Rakovitza, Ecological Reserve Siboney-Jutici, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. Nov 3, 2010, col. A. Sánchez: 1. dorsal view; 2. ventral view; 3. epigynum, dorsal; 4. epigynum, ventral.

introduction respectively. We agree that its presence in Cuba could be due the same cause. The Ecological Reserve Siboney-Jutici retains all of its original terrestrial habitats, including coastal and pre-coastal xeromorphic scrub and semideciduous microphyll forest, the two most important vegetation types for conservation in the area (Fong *et al.* 2005). However, *C. praedonius* was captured in a secondary xeromorphic scrub around the Field Station, which is visited by a significant number of tourists and biologists in a year, and received several donations of

equipments and materials from Europe. Field Station is just 1 km from the town of Siboney which many international tourists rent houses throughout all over the year. The source of this introduction is unknown, but due to the synanthropic environment of the collecting site and its proximity to the town of Siboney, is possible that one (or several) gravid females, arriving in suitcases of tourists or in containers with donations equipments, have been able to survive in the area.

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