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Oribatella (*Oribatella*) *prominens* sp. nov. (Acari, Oribatida, Oribatellidae) from Nepal, with a key to known species of the genus from the Oriental region

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ABSTRACT

The genus *Oribatella* (Oribatida, Oribatellidae) comprises 136 species with a cosmopolitan distribution. A new species, *O.* (*Oribatella*) *prominens* **sp. nov.**, is described, based on adult specimens collected from litter and the upper soil stratum in the mixed *Shorea robusta* forest in lowland Nepal. The new species is characterized by the presence of the elongate prodorsobasal lamina at basal part of the prodorsum. An identification key to the known species of *Oribatella* from the Oriental region is presented, and a summary of the habitats of Nepalese *Oribatella* species is provided.

KEYWORDS

Asia, habitat, morphology, oribatid mites, taxonomy

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INTRODUCTION

The oribatid mite genus *Oribatella* (Acari, Oribatida, Oribatellidae) was proposed by Banks (1895), with *Oribatella quadridentata* Banks, 1895 as type species. The genus comprises 136 species and two subspecies which are classified into three subgenera (Subías 2022; including personal data): *O.* (*Oribatella*) Banks, 1895 (131 species and two subspecies), *O.* (*Fberninia*) Özdikmen, 2008 (one species), and *O.* (*Multoribatella*) Subías, 2004 (four species). Species of *Oribatella* have a cosmopolitan distribution, and inhabit various substrates across different ecosystems, with a frequent occurrence in forest soil-litter (e.g., Ryabinin and Pankov 2002; Murvanidze and Mumladze 2016; Corpuz-Raros and Ermilov 2020; Behan-Pelletier and Lindo 2023). Generic characters were summarized by Behan-Pelletier and Eamer (2010), Behan-Pelletier (2011). An identification key to nine species of *Oribatella* from the Oriental region was presented by Ermilov and Anichkin (2012a).

The main goals of this paper are to describe a new species of *O.* (*Oribatella*) collected from Nepal, to present an identification key to the 19 known species from the Oriental region, and to sum up the habitats of the Nepalese species of *Oribatella*.

Prior to this study, only four species of *Oribatella* have been registered from Nepal (Ermilov and Martens 2014b, 2021, 2024): *O.* (*O.*) *berlesei* (Michael, 1898), *O.* (*O.*) *microfoveolata* Hammer, 1977, *O.* (*O.*) *paraumaetluisorum* Ermilov and Martens, 2014, and *O.* (*O.*) *sculpturata* Mahunka, 1987.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The oribatid mite specimens were collected during the Jochen Martens Expeditions to Nepal (Martens 1987) in 1988 (results of the Himalaya Expeditions of J. Martens from 1969–2004, No 296. Jochen Martens was sponsored by DAAD and DFG; for the 1988 itinerary see Martens and Eck 1995) and until recently were housed in the Institut für Organismische und Molekulare Evolutionsbiologie (Mainz, Germany).

For measurement and illustration, specimens were mounted in lactic acid on temporary cavity slides. Body length was measured in lateral view, from the tip of the rostrum to the posterior edge of the notogaster. Body width refers to the maximum width of the notogaster (level of pteromorphs) in dorsal view. Setae were measured from the side to avoid foreshortening. All measurements are in micrometres (μm). Formulas for leg setation are given in parentheses according to the sequence trochanter-femur-genu-tibia-tarsus (famulus included). Formulas for leg solenidia are given in square brackets, according to the sequence genu-tibia-tarsus. Paired structures are described in the singular, unless otherwise noted. Drawings were made with a camera lucida using a Leica DM 2500 light microscope.

Terminology – Morphological terminology used in this paper follows that of F. Grandjean: see Travé and Vachon (1975) for references, Norton (1977) for leg setal nomenclature, and Norton and Behan-Pelletier (2009) for overview.

Abbreviations – Prodorsum: *rt* = rostral tooth; *rl* = rostral lamina; *lam* = lamella; *pbl* = prodorsobasal lamina; *tu* = tutorium; *ro*, *le*, *in*, *bs*, *ex* = rostral, lamellar, interlamellar, bothridial, and exobothridial setae, respectively. Notogaster: *Aa*, *A1*, *A2*, *A3* = porose areas; *c*, *la*, *lm*, *lp*, h_1–h_3, p_1–p_3 = setae; *im*, *ip*, *ih*, *ips* = lyrifissures; *gla* = opisthonotal gland opening. Gnathosoma: *a*, *m*, *h* = subcapitular setae; *sup*, *inf*, *d*, *l*, *cm*, *acm*, *ul*, *su*, *vt* = palp setae; ω = palp solenidion; *as* = axillary saccule; *cha*, *chb* = cheliceral setae; *Tg* = Trägårdh's organ. Epimeral and lateral podosomal regions: *1a–1c*, *2a*, *3a–3c*, *4a–4c* = epimeral setae; *Ah* = humeral porose area; *gt* = genital tooth; *PdI*, *PdII* = pedotecta I, II, respectively; *dis* = discidium; *cir* = circumpedal carina. Anogenital region: *g*, *ag*, *an*, *ad* = genital, aggenital, anal, and adanal setae, respectively; *iad* = adanal lyrifissure; *po* = preanal organ. Legs: *Tr*, *Fe*, *Ge*, *Ti*, *Ta* = trochanter, femur, genu, tibia, and tarsus, respectively; *t* = tooth of tibia I; *pa* = porose area; ω, φ, σ = solenidia; *e* = famulus; *d*, *l*, *v*, *bv*, *ev*, *ft*, *tc*, *it*, *p*, *u*, *a*, *s*, *pv*, *pl* = setae.

RESULTS

TAXONOMY

Family Oribatellidae Jacot, 1925

Genus *Oribatella* Banks, 1895

Type species: *Oribatella quadridentata* Banks, 1895

Oribatella (*Oribatella*) *prominens* sp. nov. (Figs 1–9)

http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:C7D989AA-DEFD-48BC-989F-57B096B75830

Type material

Holotype (male) and three paratypes (two males and one female): eastern Nepal, Koshi Province, Ilam District, 5 km north of Sanischare, southern hills of Siwalik Mts, 270–300 m a.s.l., litter and the upper stratum of soil (field number 308) in the mixed *Shorea robusta* forest, 3–5 April 1988, collected by J. Martens and W. Schawaller.

Type deposition

The holotype is deposited in the collection of the Senckenberg Museum of Natural History, Görlitz, Germany. Two paratypes are deposited in the collection of the University of Tyumen, Museum of Zoology, Tyumen, Russia. One paratype is retained in the personal collection of the first author. All specimens are preserved in 70% solution of ethanol with a drop of glycerol added.

Diagnosis

Body length 300–330. Pteromorph and epimeres partially with raised lines. Rostrum with two elongate teeth and incised lamina between them. Distal part of lamella with two long teeth and U-shaped indentation between them. Inner margins of lamellae separated basally. Translamella absent. Basal part of prodorsum with median, elongate prodorsobasal lamina. Tutorium with four or five teeth. Interlamellar seta protrudes beyond lamellar teeth. Bothridial seta long, fusiform, barbed. Pteromorph margin serrate anterolaterally. Ten pairs of notogastral setae short, setiform, slightly barbed (*c*, *la*, h_1 slightly longer than others). Epimeral seta *4c* longer than other epimeral setae, thick. Custodium absent. Anogenital setae setiform, slightly barbed. Adanal lyrifissure oblique, located anterior to anal plate. All leg tarsi tridactylous.

Description

Measurements – Body length 315 (holotype), 300, 315 (male paratypes), 330 (female paratype). Body width (level of pteromorph) 210 (holotype), 195, 210 (male paratypes), 225 (female paratype).

Integument – Body colour light brown. Body sparsely microgranulate (except sparsely microfoveolate adanal region, lateral and posterior parts of notogaster). Additionally, pteromorph, epimeres I–III, and lateral part of lamella partially with raised lines. Antiaxial side of leg femora I–IV and trochanters III, IV partially with raised lines and microfoveolae.

Prodorsum – Rostrum with two strong teeth and incised lamina between them. Distal part of lamella with two well-developed teeth (similar in length) and deep U-shaped indentation between them. Lateral margin of outer tooth with several barbs. Inner margins of lamellae separated basally. Translamella absent. Basal part of prodorsum with median, elongate lamina (30–34 × 15). Distal part of tutorium with four or five small, blunt and sharp teeth. Rostral seta (67–71) setiform, with dense cilia unilaterally. Lamellar seta (67–75) bacilliform, barbed. Interlamellar seta (127–131) setiform, barbed, protrudes beyond lamellar teeth. Bothridial seta (71–79) fusiform, barbed, with stalk and head similar in length. Exobothridial seta (37–41) setiform, slightly barbed. Dorsosejugal porose area not observed.

Notogaster – Anterior margin convex medially. Lenticulus diffuse. Pteromorph margin serrate anterolaterally. Ten pairs of notogastral setae (*c* 37–41; *la*, h_1 30–37; *lm*, *lp*, h_2, h_3, p_1–p_3 22–30) setiform, slightly barbed. Porose areas circular (5–7). Opisthonotal gland opening and lyrifissures distinct (except *ia* not observed).

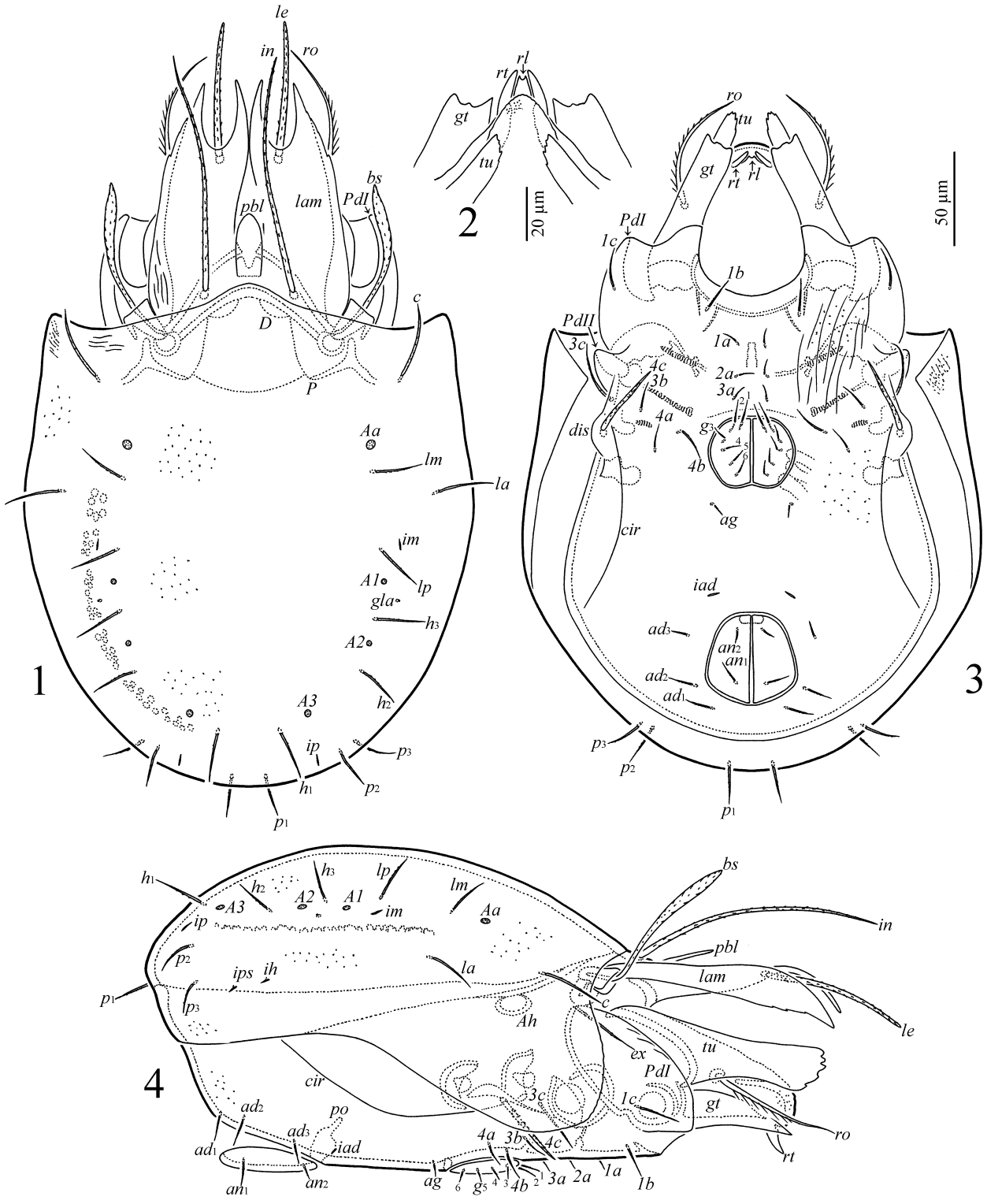
Gnathosoma – Subcapitulum size 71–79 × 52–60. Subcapitular setae (*a* 11; *m* 22; *h* 15) setiform, slightly barbed. Adoral setae (5) acicular. Palp length 52–56. Palp setal formula 0–2–1–3–9(+ω). Postpalpal seta (4) spiniform, smooth. Chelicera length 75–82. Cheliceral setae (*cha* 26, *chb* 15) setiform, barbed.

Epimeral and lateral podosomal regions – Epimeral setal formula 3–1–3–3. Epimeral seta *4c* (41–45) thick, barbed, other setae (*1a*, *2a*, *3a* 9–11; *3b*, *3c*, *4a* 13–15; *1b*, *1c*, *4b* 22–26) setiform, slightly barbed. Custodium absent. Discidium with rounded top. Circumpedal carina distinct. Humeral porose area *Ah* oval, *Am* not observed.

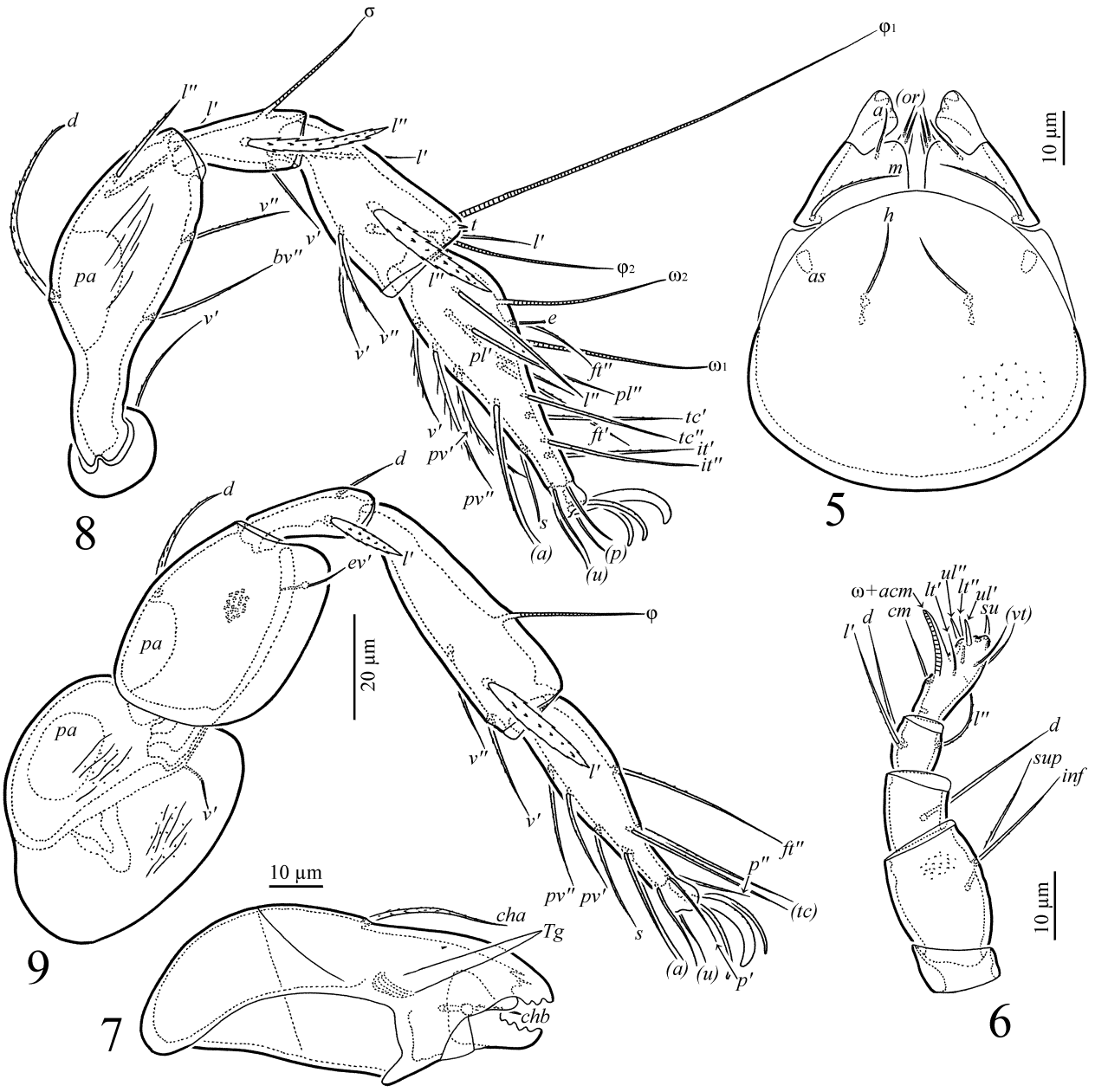
Anogenital region – Anogenital setal formula 6–1–2–3. Genital (g_1, g_2 13–15; g_3–g_6 9–11), aggenital (9–11), anal (an_1 15–19; an_2 9–11), and adanal (ad_1, ad_2 19–22; ad_3 11–15) setae setiform, slightly barbed. Adanal lyrifissure oblique, located anterior to anal plate and distanced from it. Postanal porose area (visible in posterior view) elongate oval (19 × 5). Ovipositor typical for *Oribatella* (Ermilov 2010): length of blade 41; length of distal section (beyond middle fold) 41; width of distal section 37. Each of three blades with four smooth setae, $\psi_1 \approx \tau_1$ (34) rod-like, $\psi_2 \approx \tau_a \approx \tau_b \approx \tau_c$ (15) spiniform. Six coronal setae (15) spiniform.

Legs – All leg tarsi tridactylous. Medial claw distinctly thicker than lateral claws, all claws slightly barbed on dorsal side. Dorsoanterior part of tibia I with two small teeth. Porose area on femora I–IV and on trochanters III, IV faintly visible. Formulas of leg setation and solenidia: I (1–5–3–4–20) [1–2–2], II (1–5–3–4–15) [1–1–2], III (2–3–1–3–15) [1–1–0], IV (1–2–2–3–12) [0–1–0]. Homology of setae

and solenidia indicated in Table 1. Seta *l''* on genua I, II and tibiae I, II, and seta *l'* on genu IV and tibia IV thick.



Figures 1–4. *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *prominens* **sp. nov.** (adult) – **1.** Dorsal view; **2.** Anterior part of prodorsum (lamellae omitted), dorsoanterior view; **3.** Ventral view (gnathosoma and legs omitted); **4.** Right lateral view (gnathosoma and legs omitted).



Figures 5–9. *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *prominens* **sp. nov.** (dissected adult) – **5.** Subcapitulum, ventral view; **6.** Palp, left, paraxial view; **7.** Chelicera, left, paraxial view; **8.** Leg I, right, antiaxial view; **9.** Leg IV, left, antiaxial view.

Table 1. Leg setation and solenidia of adult *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *prominens* **sp. nov.**

Leg	*Tr*	*Fe*	*Ge*	*Ti*	*Ta*
I	*v'*	*d*, *(l)*, *bv''*, *v''*	*(l)*, *v'*, σ	*(l)*, *(v)*, φ1, φ2	*(ft)*, *(tc)*, *(it)*, *(p)*, *(u)*, *(a)*, *s*, *(pv)*, *v'*, *(pl)*, *l''*, *e*, ω1, ω2
II	*v'*	*d*, *(l)*, *bv''*, *v''*	*(l)*, *v'*, σ	*(l)*, *(v)*, φ	*(ft)*, *(tc)*, *(it)*, *(p)*, *(u)*, *(a)*, *s*, *(pv)*, ω1, ω2
III	*l'*, *v'*	*d*, *l'*, *ev'*	*l'*, σ	*l'*, *(v)*, φ	*(ft)*, *(tc)*, *(it)*, *(p)*, *(u)*, *(a)*, *s*, *(pv)*
IV	*v'*	*d*, *ev'*	*d*, *l'*	*l'*, *(v)*, φ	*ft''*, *(tc)*, *(p)*, *(u)*, *(a)*, *s*, *(pv)*

Note: *Tr*, *Fe*, *Ge*, *Ti*, *Ta* = trochanter, femur, genu, tibia, and tarsus, respectively. Roman letters refer to normal setae, Greek letters to solenidia. Single prime (') marks setae on the anterior and double prime ('') setae on the posterior side of a given leg segment. Parentheses refer to a pair of setae.

Remarks

Oribatella (*Oribatella*) *prominens* **sp. nov.** is distinguished from all other known congeners by the

presence (versus absence) of the median, elongate lamina at basal part of the prodorsum. From the Oriental species, the new species is similar to *O.* (*O.*) *pavelklimovi* Ermilov and Starý, 2018 from Vietnam in main morphological traits, e.g., 10 pairs of notogastral setae present; lamellae separated basally; translamella and interlamellar tubercle absent; dorsolateral notogastral setae short (*lm* not reaching level of insertion level of *lp*); all legs tridactylous. However, *O.* (*O.*) *prominens* **sp. nov.** differs from *O.* (*O.*) *pavelklimovi* by smaller body size (length 300–330 versus 381–398), the morphology of the notogastral seta p_2 and all adanal setae (setiform versus thick), and the presence (versus absence) of the prodorsobasal lamina.

Etymology

The specific epithet *prominens* comes from the Latin word for "prominent" and alludes to the presence of the lamina in basal part of the prodorsum.

Key to *Oribatella* from the Oriental region

We exclude some supplementary data (e.g., Dzhaparidze 1989; Aoki 1970; Seniczak and Seniczak 2013) on *O.* (*O.*) *berlesei* (Michael, 1898) and *O.* (*O.*) *superbula* (Berlese, 1904) (syn.: *Oribatella meridionalis* Berlese, 1908), because they contradict with other supplementary descriptions.

1. Twelve pairs of notogastral setae. Interlamellar seta short, distinctly not reaching level of insertion of lamellar seta ..... *Oribatella* (*Multoribatella*) *alami* Kardar, 1975
   See Hafeez Kardar (1975). Body length 520. Distribution: Himalayas.
– Ten pairs of notogastral setae. Interlamellar seta reaching level of insertion of lamellar setae 2
2. Lamellae separated basally, translamella absent 3
– Lamellae connected basally by translamella 9
3. All leg tarsi with two claws ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *umaetluisorum* Ermilov & Anichkin, 2012
   See Ermilov and Anichkin (2012a). Body length 336–356. Distribution: Oriental region.
– All leg tarsi with one or three claws 4
4. All leg tarsi with one claw 5
– All leg tarsi with three claws 6
5. Outer and inner teeth of lamella similar in length. Rostrum rounded. Notogaster and anogenital region not polygonate ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *zsilavii* Mahunka, 2008
   See Mahunka (2008b). Body length 306–327. Distribution: Thailand.
– Outer tooth lamella longer than inner tooth. Rostrum bidentate. Notogaster and anogenital region partially polygonate ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *sculpturata* Mahunka, 1987
   See Mahunka (1987a). Body length 303–324. Distribution: Oriental region.
6. Rostrum rounded. Dorsolateral notogastral setae medium-sized, *lm* reaching level of insertion level of *lp* ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *prolongata* Hammer, 1961
   See Hammer (1961). Body length 450. Distribution: Neotropical region, Vietnam.
– Rostrum with not rounded. Dorsolateral notogastral setae short, *lm* not reaching level of insertion level of *lp* 7
7. Rostrum nearly undulate, with vaguely defined teeth and indentations. Bothridial seta clavate .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *paraumaetluisorum* Ermilov & Martens, 2014
   See Ermilov and Martens (2014b). Body length 415. Distribution: Nepal.
– Rostrum not undulate. Bothridial seta fusiform 8
8. Notogastral seta p_2 and all adanal setae setiform. Basal part of prodorsum with prominent lamina ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *prominens* **sp. nov.**
   See present data. Body length 300–330. Distribution: Nepal.
– Notogastral seta p_2 and all adanal setae thick. Basal part of prodorsum without prominent lamina ... . *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *pavelklimovi* Ermilov & Starý, 2018
   See Ermilov and Starý (2018). Body length 381–398. Distribution: Vietnam.
9. Translamella with tubercle 10

– Translamella without tubercle 11
10. All leg tarsi with two claws. Outer tooth of lamella longer than inner tooth. Rostrum with indentation medially ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *superbula* (Berlese, 1904)
See Bernini (1975); Weigmann (2001, 2006). Body length 290–350. Distribution: southern Palaearctic and northern Oriental regions.
– All leg tarsi with three claws. Outer and inner teeth of lamella similar in length. Rostrum pointed ... . *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *berlesei* (Michael, 1898)
See Grabowski (1967); Pérez-Íñigo (1972, 1989, 1993); Bernini (1977); Chistyakov (1984). Body length 380–520. Distribution: Holarctic region, Nepal.
11. Outer and inner teeth of lamella significantly different in length 12
– Outer and inner teeth of lamella slightly differ in length 14
12. Outer tooth lamella shorter than inner tooth. Rostrum pointed .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *reducta* Balogh, 1985
See Balogh (1985). Body length 267–279. Distribution: Australian and Oriental regions.
– Outer tooth lamella longer than inner tooth. Rostrum bidentate 13
13. Notogastral seta h_1 thicker than other notogastral setae. Tutorium with six to eight teeth. Epimeral setae *1a*, *2a*, and *3a* medium-sized ..... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *malaya* Balogh and Mahunka, 1974
See Balogh and Mahunka (1974); Mahunka (1987b). Body length 242–268. Distribution: Oriental region.
– Notogastral seta h_1 not thicker than other notogastral setae. Tutorium with four or five teeth. Epimeral setae *1a*, *2a*, and *3a* short .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *gerdweigmanni* Ermilov & Anichkin, 2012
See Ermilov and Anichkin (2012b). Body length 225–246. Distribution: Vietnam.
14. Rostrum not pointed 15
– Rostrum pointed 16
15. Rostrum with indentation. Dorsolateral notogastral setae long, *lm* reaching level of insertion level of h_3. Genital, aggenital, anal, and adanal setae thickened .. *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *szemesi* Mahunka, 2008
See Mahunka (2008a). Body length 466–494. Distribution: Thailand.
– Rostrum rounded, with one pair of lateral teeth. Dorsolateral notogastral setae short, *lm* not reaching level of insertion of h_3. Genital, aggenital, anal, and adanal setae simple .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *illuminata* Hammer, 1961
See Hammer (1961). Body length 420. Distribution: Neotropical region, Vietnam.
16. Bothridial seta short, not reaching level of anterior margin of pedotectum I in dorsal view 17
– Bothridial seta long, reaching level of anterior margin of pedotectum I in dorsal view 18
17. Bothridial stalk and basal part of head sunken in bothridium .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *palustris* Hammer, 1962
See Hammer (1962a); Bayartogtokh and Ermilov (2019). Body length 514–548. Distribution: Neotropical region, Falkland Islands, India.
– Bothridial head and distal part of bothridial stalk not sunken in bothridium .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *unispinata* Hammer, 1958
See Hammer (1958). Body length 450. Distribution: Bolivia, India.
18. Outer and inner teeth of lamella longer than distance between them .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *microfoveolata* Hammer, 1977
See Hammer (1977). Body length 365. Distribution: Pakistan, India.
– Outer and inner teeth of lamella not longer than distance between them .... *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *quadrispinata* Hammer, 1962
See Hammer (1962b). Body length 400. Distribution: Argentina, Vietnam.

HABITATS OF *ORIBATELLA* IN NEPAL

According to the summarized data (Table 2), the Nepalese species of *Oribatella* inhabit mainly soil-

litter in forests of different types.

Table 2. Habitats of *Oribatella* species in Nepal.

Species	Habitats	References
O.* (*O.*) *berlesei	Leaf litter and upper layer of soil under bushes in degraded *Quercus* forest	Ermilov and Martens (2021)
O.* (*O.*) *microfoveolata	Litter and upper soil in *Rhododendron–Lithocarpus* forest	Ermilov and Martens (2024)
O.* (*O.*) *paraumaetluisorum	Soil-litter in *Quercus semecarpifolia* forest. Soil in the mixed forest (*Abies densa*, *Larix* sp., *Rhododendron* sp.). Soil in broad-leaved forest. Litter and upper soil in *Rhododendron–Lithocarpus* forest	Ermilov and Martens (2014a, b, 2021, 2024)
O.* (*O.*) *prominens	Litter and the upper stratum of soil in the mixed *Shorea robusta* forest	Present data
O.* (*O.*) *sculpturata	Litter and upper soil in *Rhododendron–Lithocarpus* forest	Ermilov and Martens (2024)

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Data availability: Data are available upon request from the authors.

Ethics approval: This study only included arthropod material, and all required ethical guidelines for the treatment and use of animals were strictly adhered to in accordance with international, national, and institutional regulations. No human participants were involved in any studies conducted by the authors for this article.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Generative AI statement: The authors declare that AI was not used at any stage of the manuscript development.

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گونهٔ جدید *Oribatella* (*Oribatella*) *prominens* (Acari, Oribatida, Oribatellidae) از نپال، به همراه کلیدی برای گونه‌های شناخته شده این جنس از ناحیهٔ اورینتال

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دریافت
۲۱ بهمن ۱۴۰۴
پذیرش
۱ فروردین ۱۴۰۵
انتشار
۲۶ فروردین ۱۴۰۵
دبیر تخصصی
ع. صبوری

چکیده

جنس *Oribatella* (Oribatida, Oribatellidae) شامل ۱۳۶ گونه با پراکندگی جهانی است. گونهٔ جدید *O. prominens* (*Oribatella*) بر اساس نمونه‌های بالغ جمع‌آوری‌شده از لاشبرگ و لایهٔ بالایی خاک در جنگل مخلوط *Shorea robusta* در مناطق پست نپال توصیف شده است. این گونهٔ جدید با وجود لایهٔ پایه‌پُشته کشیده در قسمت پایهٔ پُشته مشخص می‌شود. کلید شناسایی گونه‌های شناخته‌شده *Oribatella* از ناحیهٔ اورینتال و چکیده‌ای از زیستگاه‌های گونه‌های *Oribatella* نپال ارایه شده است.

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واژگان کلیدی: آسیا، زیستگاه، ریخت‌شناسی، هرناهای اریباتید، آرایه‌شناسی

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