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## Article

### Oribatid mites (Acari, Oribatida) from riverine environments in New Caledonia

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#### ABSTRACT

The present study is based on oribatid mite materials collected from benthic samples in four river locations on the Grande Terre Island, New Caledonia. A list of eight species, belonging to six genera and five families, is presented; among them are taxa that are new for the fauna of New Caledonia. One new species of the genus *Trhypochthoniellus* (Trhypochthoniidae)—*T. grandensis* **sp. nov.**—is described; it is mainly characterized by the nasiform rostrum having ridges; slightly polygonate ornamentation on the notogaster and in the anogenital region; the absence of the bothridial seta and bothridium; the relative length of prodorsal setae:  $in > le > ro$ ; 14 pairs ( $p_3$  absent) of the notogastral setae setiform (except  $f_1$  as alveolus), nearly smooth; the relative length of the notogastral setae:  $c_3, e_2, h_1, h_2, p_2 > cp, e_1, h_3, p_1 > d_2 > c_1, c_2, d_1, f_2$ ; six pairs of genital setae.

**KEY WORDS:** Australasian region, fauna, morphology, new record, taxonomy, *Trhypochthoniellus*.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The oribatid mites (Acari, Oribatida) of New Caledonia are moderately well documented, with approximately 60 species currently known (e.g., Balogh and Balogh 1983; Ermilov *et al.* 2013; Ermilov and Mary 2020; Subías 2022, online version 2024). The present study is based on materials collected from benthic samples in rivers on the Grande Terre Island. The main goals of our paper are as follows: to present a list of the identified taxa and to describe a new species belonging to the genus *Trhypochthoniellus* Willmann, 1928 (Trhypochthoniidae) under the name *Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* **sp. nov.**

*Trhypochthoniellus* was proposed by Willmann (1928), with *Trhypochthonius* (*Trhypochthoniellus*) *setosus* Willmann, 1928 as type species (it is regarded as “forma” of *T. longisetus* (Berlese, 1904) – see Weigmann 1997, 1999). The genus comprises 11 species and three subspecies having a cosmopolitan distribution collectively (Subías 2022, online version 2024). Representatives of *Trhypochthoniellus* inhabit numerous substrates (e.g. soil, litter, moss) in different biotopes (Fujikawa 2000; Kuriki 2005); some of them are associated with freshwater habitats and flowing waters, living on aquatic plants or in aquatic sediments (Weigmann and Deichsel 2006; Behan-Pelletier and Lindo 2023). The main generic characters were summarized by Ermilov and

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Weigmann (2015). An identification key to 10 species of *Trhypochthoniellus* was presented by Ojeda *et al.* (2020).

Prior to this study, one species of *Trhypochthoniellus* was recorded in New Caledonia, *T. longisetus* (Berlese 1904) (Ermilov and Mary 2020).

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

**Sampling** – Benthic samples containing oribatid mites were collected using a Surber Sampler (steel frame (25×20 cm) with a sieve (mesh size 250 mm)) in four river locations on the Grande Terre Island in New Caledonia (Figs. 1–8):

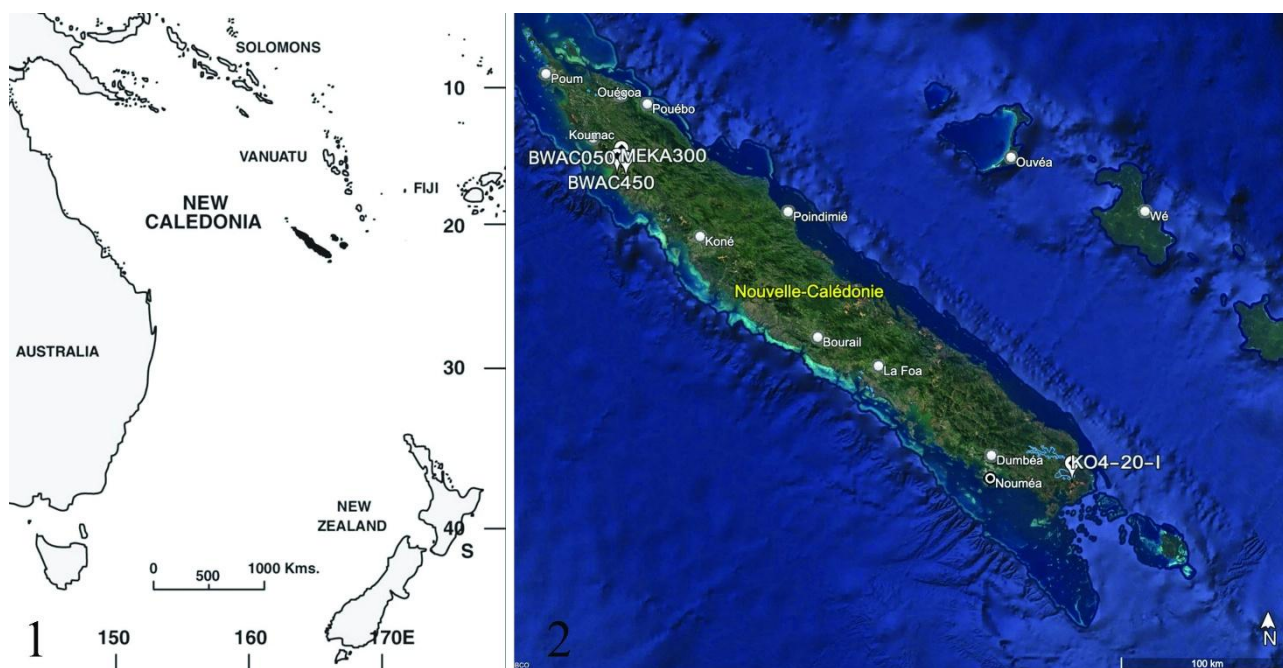
– location 1 (KO4-20-I): South of Grande Terre, Kwé Ouest River, 22° 17' 45.8912" S, 166° 55' 37.5985" E, 177 m a.s.l. (N.J. Mary);

– location 2 (MEKA300): North of Grande Terre, Ouaco Region, Mékandoui River, 20° 42' 27.6253" S, 164° 27' 23.7960" E, 30 m a.s.l. (N.J. Mary);

– location 3 (BWAC450): North of Grande Terre, Ouaco Region, Bwacibu River, 20° 44' 45.0503" S, 164° 25' 57.1746" E, 22 m a.s.l. (N.J. Mary);

– location 4 (BWAC050): North of Grande Terre, Ouaco Region, Bwacibu River, 20° 45' 38.3792" S, 164° 28' 52.0979" E, 141 m a.s.l. (N.J. Mary).

Oribatid mites were separated into 70% ethanol using a Leica MZ7.5 stereomicroscope.



**Figures 1–2.** Maps of locations – 1. New Caledonia in the Australasian region; 2. Locations within New Caledonia: KO4-20-I (location 1); MEKA300 (location 2); BWAC450 (location 3); BWAC050 (location 4).

**Observation and documentation** – For measurement and illustration, specimens were mounted in lactic acid on temporary cavity slides. All measurements are in micrometers (μm); body length was measured in lateral view, from the tip of the rostrum to the posterior edge of the notogaster; notogastral width refers to the maximum width in dorsal aspect; setal lengths were measured in lateral aspect. Formulas for leg setation are given in parentheses according to the sequence trochanter-femur-genu-tibia-tarsus (femulus included); formulas for leg solenidia are given in square brackets, according to the sequence genu-tibia-tarsus. Drawings were made with a camera lucida using a Leica

DM 2500 transmission light microscope.



**Figures 3–8.** Photos of the river locations and sampling – 3, 4. KO4-20-I (location 1); 5. MEKA300 (location 2); 6. BWAC450 (location 3); 7. BWAC050 (location 4); 8. Sampling of benthic samples by Dr. Nathalie J. Mary.

**Terminology** – Morphological terminology is mostly that of Grandjean (references in Travé and Vachon 1975); also, Norton (1977), Norton and Ermilov (2024) for leg setal notation, and Norton and Behan-Pelletier (2009) for general overview, are used.

**Abbreviations** – *Prodorsum*: *ro*, *le*, *in*, *ex*<sub>1</sub> = rostral, lamellar, interlamellar, and first exobothridial setae, respectively; *ex*<sub>2</sub> = alveolus of second exobothridial seta. *Notogaster*: *c*<sub>1</sub>–*c*<sub>3</sub>, *cp*, *d*<sub>1</sub>, *d*<sub>2</sub>, *e*<sub>1</sub>, *e*<sub>2</sub>, *f*<sub>2</sub>, *h*<sub>1</sub>–*h*<sub>3</sub>, *p*<sub>1</sub>, *p*<sub>2</sub> = setae; *f*<sub>1</sub> = setal alveolus; *ia*, *im*, *ip*, *ih*, *ips* = lyrifissures; *gla* = opisthonotal gland opening. *Gnathosoma*: *a*, *m*, *h* = subcapitular setae; *or*<sub>1</sub>–*or*<sub>3</sub> = adoral setae; *d*, *sup*, *cm*, *acm*, *ul*, *su*, *vt*, *lt* = palp setae;  $\omega$  = palp solenidion; *cha*, *chb* = cheliceral setae; *Tg* = Trägårdh's organ. *Epimeral region*: *1a*, *1b*, *1c*, *2a*, *3a*, *3b*, *3c*, *4a*, *4c* = setae. *Anogenital region*: *g*<sub>1</sub>–*g*<sub>6</sub>, *an*, *ad*<sub>1</sub>,

$ad_2$  = genital, anal, and adanal setae, respectively;  $iad$  = adanal lyrifissure. *Legs*:  $\omega$ ,  $\phi$ ,  $\sigma$  = solenidia;  $d$ ,  $l$ ,  $v$ ,  $bv$ ,  $ev$ ,  $ft$ ,  $tc$ ,  $it$ ,  $p$ ,  $u$ ,  $a$ ,  $s$ ,  $pv$  = setae.

**Notes** – References to the original descriptions of species are not included in the *References* section.

## LIST OF TAXA

Distribution mostly from Subías (2022, online version 2024).

### Malaconothridae

*Tyrphonothrus crassisetosus fijiensis* (Hammer, 1971): location 1 (2 ex.). Distribution: Australian, Afrotropical, and Oriental regions.

*Tyrphonothrus maior* (Berlese, 1910): location 1 (14 ex.). Distribution: Semicosmopolitan. New record of the species in New Caledonia.

### Trhypochthoniidae

*Allonothrus russeolus reticulatus* Hammer, 1972: location 3 (1 ex.). Distribution: Australian and Oriental regions.

*Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* **sp. nov.**: location 1 (10 ex.). Distribution: New Caledonia.

### Hydrozetidae

*Hydrozetes lemnae* (Coggi, 1897): locations 1 (1 ex.), 2 (37 ex.), 3 (1 ex.). Distribution: Semicosmopolitan.

### Scheloribatidae

*Scheloribates fimbriatus whitteni* Jacot, 1934: locations 1 (1 ex.), 3 (1 ex.). Distribution: Marquesas Islands. New record of the species in New Caledonia.

*Scheloribates tubuaiensis* Sellnick, 1959: location 4 (1 ex.). Distribution: Australian region, Caucasus.

### Galumnidae

*Galumna fordi* (Jacot, 1934): location 2 (1 ex.). Distribution: Tropical region. New record of the species in New Caledonia.

The list includes eight species, belonging to six genera and five families. *Tyrphonothrus maior*, *Scheloribates fimbriatus whitteni*, and *Galumna fordi* are reported in New Caledonia for the first time. *Scheloribates fimbriatus whitteni* is known only in the Marquesas Islands, the other species (except one new species) have broad distributions (more than one geographical region), including two semicosmopolitan species.

## TAXONOMY

### Family Trhypochthoniidae

#### Genus *Trhypochthoniellus* Willmann, 1928

**Type species:** *Trhypochthonius* (*Trhypochthoniellus*) *setosus* Willmann, 1928

#### *Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* **sp. nov.** (Figs. 9–21)

<http://zoobank.org/urn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:906C1FC0-6E21-4615-A111-BF853555F28A>

#### Type material

Holotype (female) and nine paratypes (nine females): New Caledonia, Grande Terre Island, Kwé Ouest River, 22° 17' 45.8912" S, 166° 55' 37.5985" E, 177 m a.s.l., location 1 (KO4-20-I), benthic

sample (N.J. Mary).

### Type deposition

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

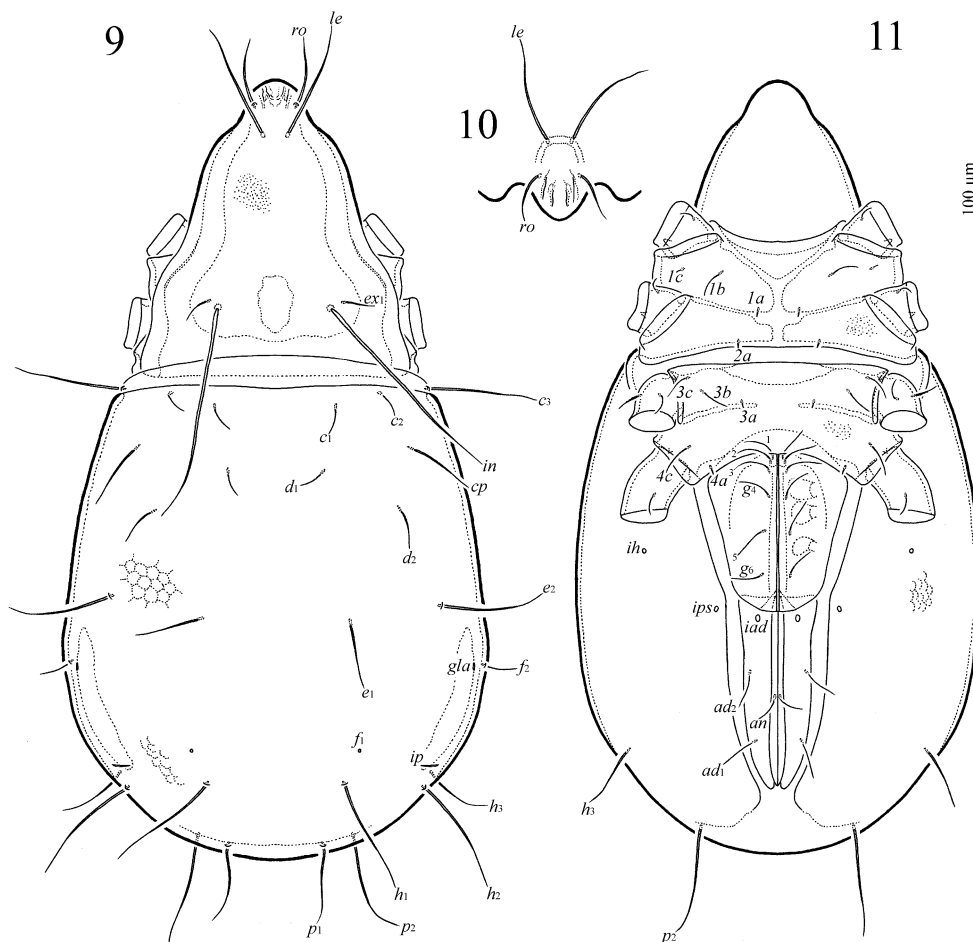
### Diagnosis

Body length: 510–555. Rostrum nasiform, with short, longitudinal ridges. Notogaster and anogenital region with slight polygonate ornamentation. Bothridial seta and bothridium absent. Relative length of prodorsal setae:  $in > le > ro$ . Fourteen pairs of notogastral setae ( $p_3$  absent;  $f_1$  as alveolus) setiform, nearly smooth; relative length of notogastral setae:  $c_3, e_2, h_1, h_2, p_2 > cp, e_1, h_3, p_1 > d_2 > c_1, c_2, d_1, f_2$ . Six pairs of genital setae. All leg tarsi with three claws.

### Description

**Measurements** – Body length: 540 (holotype), 510–555 (paratypes); body width: 300 (holotype), 277–300 (paratypes).

**Integument** – Body color light brownish to light yellowish. Body surface densely porose (clearly visible under high magnification,  $\times 1000$ ). Notogaster and anogenital region with poorly observed polygonate ornamentation. Rostral region with several short, longitudinal ridges.



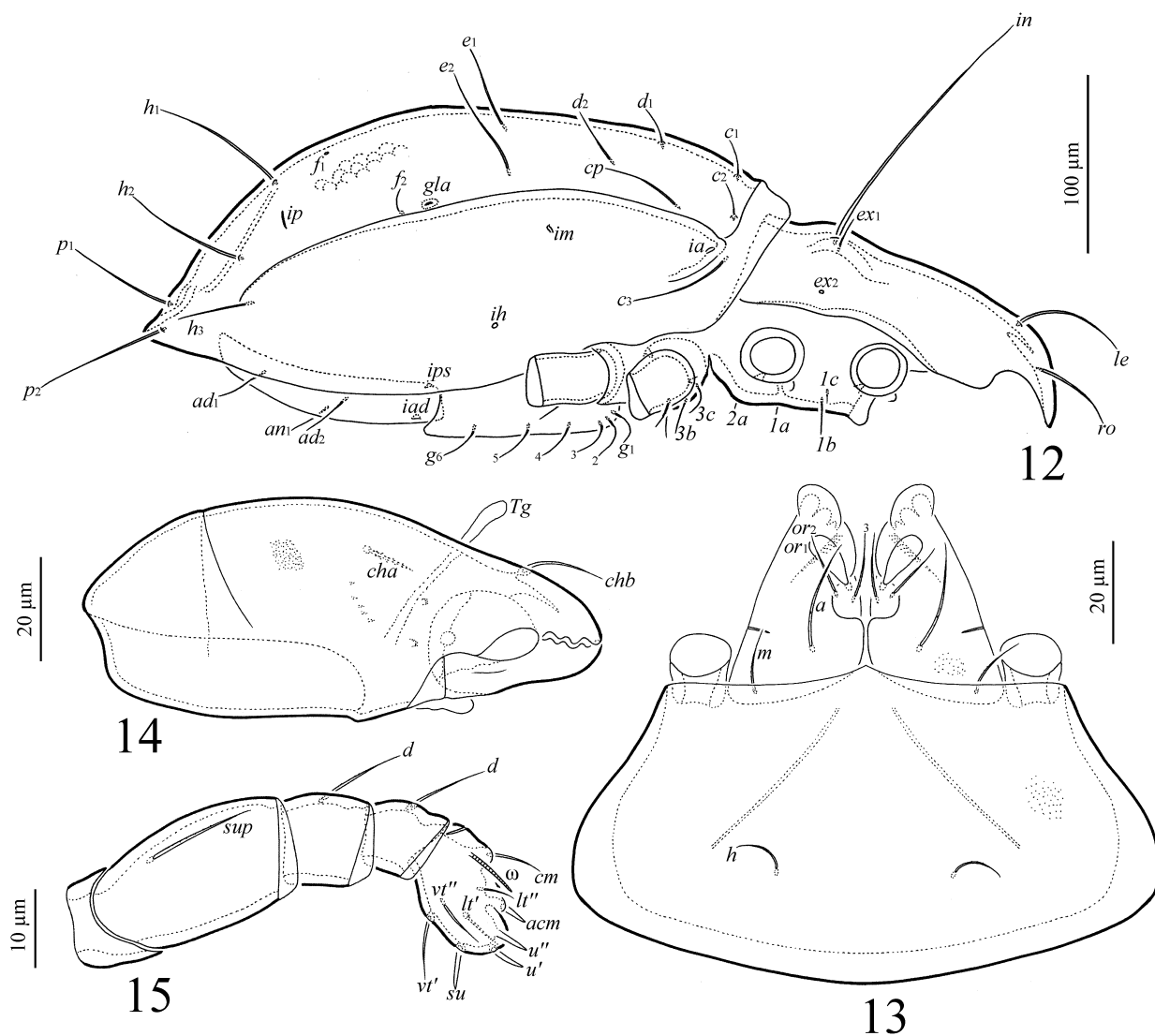
**Figures 9–11.** *Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* sp. nov. (adult; gnathosoma and legs except trochanters omitted) – 9. Dorsal view; 10. Rostrum, dorsal view; 11. Ventral view.

**Prodorsum (Figs. 9, 10, 12)** – Rostrum distinctly protruding, nasiform, narrowly rounded, curved ventrad. Rostral (45–49), lamellar (79–82), interlamellar (150–157), and first exobothridial (19–26) setae setiform, nearly smooth. Distance between insertions of setae *le–le* shorter than *ro–ro*. Bothridial seta and bothridium absent. Second exobothridial seta represented by alveolus.

**Notogaster (Figs. 9, 12)** – With parallel lateral sides or slightly dilated medioposteriorly; anterior margin nearly straight; posterior margin rounded. Fourteen pairs of setae, including alveolus of *f*<sub>1</sub> (seta *p*<sub>3</sub> completely absent); *c*<sub>1</sub>, *c*<sub>2</sub>, *d*<sub>1</sub>, *f*<sub>2</sub>: (19–22), *d*<sub>2</sub> (30–37), *cp*, *e*<sub>1</sub>, *h*<sub>3</sub>, *p*<sub>1</sub> (52–64), and *c*<sub>3</sub>, *e*<sub>2</sub>, *h*<sub>1</sub>, *h*<sub>2</sub>, *p*<sub>2</sub> (75–82) setiform, nearly smooth; *f*<sub>1</sub> slightly distanced from *h*<sub>1</sub>. Distance between insertions of setae *c*<sub>1</sub>–*c*<sub>1</sub> subequal to *d*<sub>1</sub>–*d*<sub>1</sub> or slightly longer. Opisthonotal gland opening and all lyrifissures distinct.

**Gnathosoma (Figs. 13–15)** – Subcapitulum size: 101–105 × 109–112; subcapitular setae (*a*: 22; *m*, *h*: 11–13) setiform, roughened; *a* thicker than *m* and *h*; adoral seta *or*<sub>1</sub> (9–11) leaf-shaped, smooth versus *or*<sub>2</sub> (11–13) and *or*<sub>3</sub> (11–13) setiform, roughened. Palp length: 67–71; setation: 0–1–1–1–9(+∞). Chelicera length: 109–112; seta *cha* (13) setiform, barbed; *chb* (19) setiform, roughened.

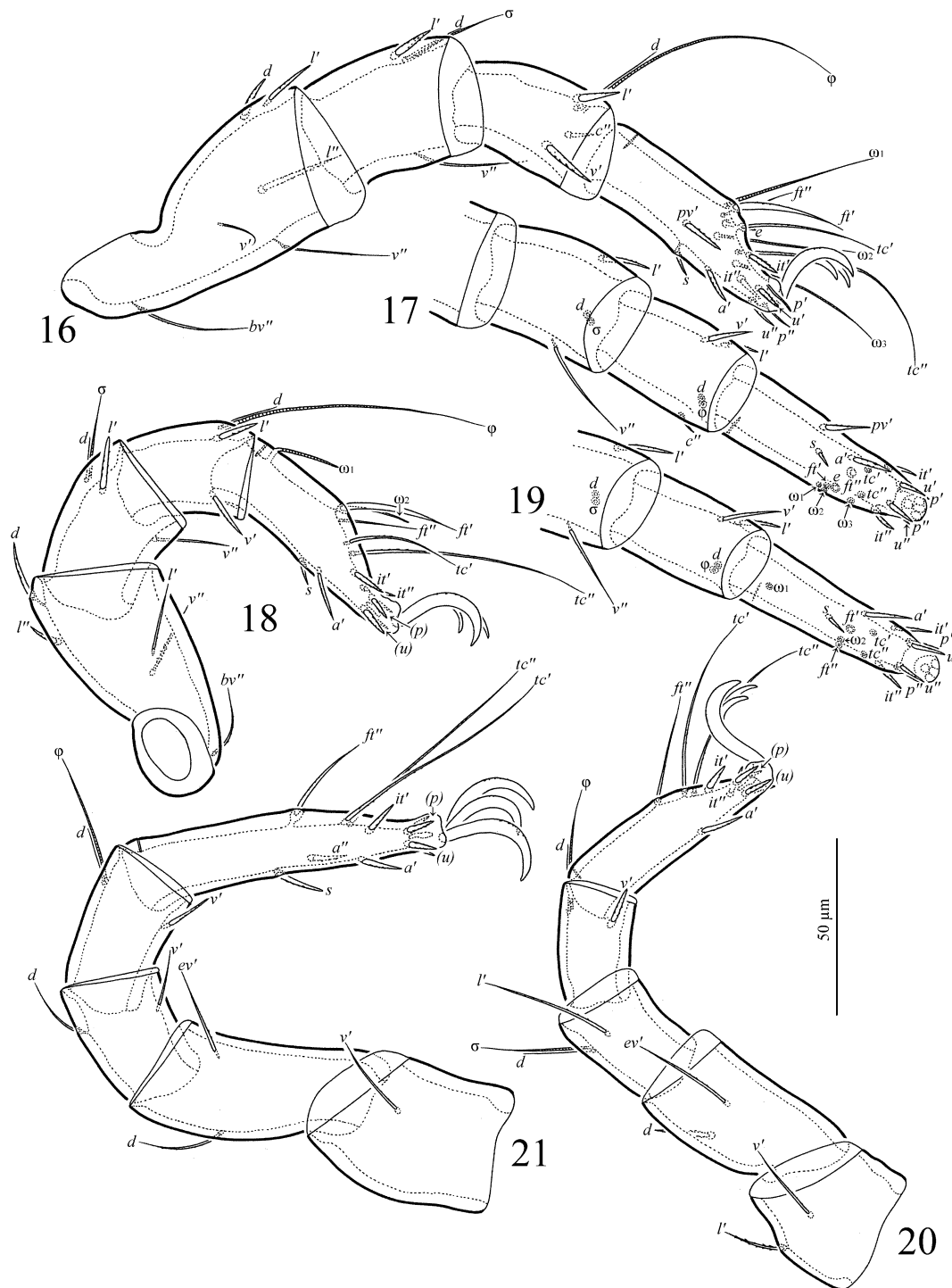
**Epimeral and lateral podosomal regions (Figs. 11, 12)** – Epimeral setal formula: 3–1–3–2; setae *1a*, *1c*, *2a*, *3a*, *4a* (5) spiniform; *1b*, *3b*, *3c*, *4c* (19–22) setiform, roughened.



**Figures 12–15.** *Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* sp. nov. (adult) – 12. Right lateral view (gnathosoma and legs except trochanters III, IV omitted); 13. Subcapitulum (dissected), ventral view; 14. Palp (dissected), right, antiaxial view; 15. Chelicera (dissected), right, antiaxial view.

**Anogenital region (Figs. 11, 12)** – Anogenital formula: 6–0–1–2; genital (26–30), anal (19–22), and adanal (26–30) setae setiform, roughened. Anal lyrifissure not visible; adanal lyrifissure distinct.

**Legs (Figs. 16–21)** – Tridactylous; claws similar in thickness, slightly barbed on dorsal side. Formulas of leg setation and solenidia: I (1–6–3–4–14) [1–1–3], II (1–5–3–3–12) [1–1–2], III (2–2–2–2–10) [1–1–0], IV (1–2–2–2–11) [0–1–0]; homology of setae and solenidia indicated in Table 1.



**Figures 16–21.** *Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* sp. nov. (adult) – 16. Leg I (trochanter omitted), left paraxial view; 17. Tarsus, tibia, genu, and anterior part of femur of leg I (solenidia and many dorsal setae except their insertions omitted), left, ventral view; 18. Leg II (trochanter omitted), left paraxial view; 19. Tarsus, tibia, and anterior part of genu of leg II (solenidia and many dorsal setae except their insertions omitted), left, ventral view; 20. Leg III, left, antiaxial view; 21. Leg IV, left, antiaxial view.

**Table 1.** Leg setation and solenidia of adult *Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* sp. nov.

| Leg | Tr     | Fe                | Ge          | Ti              | Ta                                                                                          |
|-----|--------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I   | v'     | d, (l), bv'', (v) | dσ, l', v'' | dφ, l', v', c'' | (ft), (tc), (it), (p), (u), a', s, pv', e, ω <sub>1</sub> , ω <sub>2</sub> , ω <sub>3</sub> |
| II  | v'     | d, (l), bv'', v'' | dσ, l', v'' | dφ, l', v'      | (ft), (tc), (it), (p), (u), a', s, ω <sub>1</sub> , ω <sub>2</sub>                          |
| III | l', v' | d, ev'            | dσ, l'      | dφ, v'          | ft'', (tc), (it), (p), (u), a'                                                              |
| IV  | v'     | d, ev'            | d, v'       | dφ, v'          | ft'', (tc), it', (p), (u), (a), s                                                           |

Note: Tr, Fe, Ge, Ti, Ta = trochanter, femur, genu, tibia, and tarsus, respectively. Roman letters refer to normal setae; Greek letters to solenidia; dφ and dσ = seta and solenidion coupled; 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.

### Comparison

*Trhypochthoniellus grandensis* sp. nov. is similar to *T. malaconothroiformis* Ermilov, Hugo-Coetzee & Theron, 2017 from South Africa, having a medium number of genital setae (less than eight pairs), the presence of notogastral setae that vary greatly in length, and in the absence of the bothridial seta, bothridium, and prodorsal polygonate ornamentation. The new species differs from the latter in having six (versus seven) pairs of genital setae; the morphology of the rostrum (nasiform, with several longitudinal ridges versus not nasiform, with median, longitudinal furrow); the relative lengths of the notogastral setae ( $c_3, e_2, h_1, h_2, p_2 > cp, e_1, h_3, p_1 > d_2 > c_1, c_2, d_1, f_2$  versus  $p_2 > c_3, cp, e_2, f_2, h_1, h_2, h_3, p_1 > c_2, d_2, e_1 > c_1, d_1$ ); the presence (versus absence) of slight polygonate ornamentation on the notogaster and in the anogenital region; and the number of setae on some leg segments (*it''* of tarsus I present versus absent; *l'* of trochanter III present versus absent).

### Etymology

The species name *grandensis* refers to the island of origin, Grande Terre.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## کنه‌های اورibatید (Acari, Oribatida) از محیط‌های رودخانه‌ای در کالدونیای جدید

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### چکیده

مطالعه حاضر بر اساس نمونه‌های هرناهای اورibatید جمع‌آوری‌شده از نمونه‌های کفزی در چهار مکان رودخانه‌ای در جزیره گراند تره، کالدونیای جدید است. فهرستی از هشت گونه، متعلق به شش جنس و پنج خانواده ارائه شده است. در میان آنها گونه‌هایی وجود دارند که برای زیاگان کالدونیای جدید جدیدند. گونه جدید از جنس - *Trhypochthoniellus* (*Trhypochthoniidae*) - *T. grandensis* sp. nov. توصیف می‌شود. این گونه بیشتر با خرطوم بینی‌مانند لبه‌دار؛ تزئینات کمی چندضلعی روی شکم‌گرده و در ناحیه جنسی-مخرجی؛ عدم وجود موی وشادی و وشاد؛ طول نسبی موهای پشته: موی بین تیغه‌ای < موی تیغه‌ای < موی خرطومی؛ ۱۴ جفت (عدم وجود  $p_3$ ) از موهای شکم‌گرده مویی شکل (به جز fl که فقط حفره دارد)، کم و بیش بدون انشعاب؛ طول نسبی موهای شکم‌گرده:  $d_2 < p_1$   $h_3$   $e_1$   $cp < p_2$   $h_2$   $h_1$   $e_2$   $c_3$ ؛ جفت موهای تناسلی مشخص می‌شود.

**واژگان کلیدی:** منطقه استرالیا، زیاگان، ریخت‌شناسی، گزارش جدید، آرایه‌شناسی، *Trhypochthoniellus*.

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