
A PRELIMINARY NOTE ON A SPECIES OF SPIDER NEW TO THE GENUSMINYRIOLOIDES Schenkel (ARANEAE).by JOHN CROCKER & J.R.PARKER.

Introduction: The purpose of this note is to announce the discovery of both sexes of a spider believed to be new to science and first collected in Britain in the year 1966. A full description of both sexes, including notes on the life history, ecology and distribution of the species is in preparation.

The species Minyrioloides trifrons (O.P.C.) is widespread in Britain but local, its range extending through western Europe into Scandinavia. The genotype, Minyrioloides affinis Schenkel, an east Asian species, is the only other described species in the genus. Minyrioloides maritimus sp.n. is taxonomically close to M.trifrons and the following brief description will serve to separate the two species, comparison being made with the descriptions of M.trifrons given by Locket & Millidge (1953) and Wiehle (1960).

Family: LINYPHIIDAE (Erigoninae)

Genus: Minyrioloides Schenkel 1930Species: Minyrioloides maritimus sp.n.

Material: Several specimens of the female sex were taken on the maritime sand dunes at Winterton National Nature Reserve in Norfolk (National Grid Reference TG490214) during an ecological survey, September 11th to 17th 1968.

It was considered that these females, when taken, were probably towards the end of their seasonal maturity and that both sexes would be evident in greater numbers in the early summer. One of us (JC) revisited the area during April 14th to 16th 1969 when this assumption was found to be correct. Large numbers of sub-adults were collected, some of which were reared through to the adult stage. A further visit on June 20th 1969 was made to the same area and adults of both sexes were taken.

Investigations among fellow arachnologists revealed that the species had been taken in May 1966 (1♂), June 1967 (1♂) and July 1967 (1♀, 1♂) by Mr. G.Whatmough when collecting in a similar habitat at Gibraltar Point Nature Reserve (TF5659) on the Lincolnshire coast. These were then thought to be Minyrioloides trifrons, a species normally associated with inland marshes, but which has been taken on sand dunes at Tentsmuir National Nature Reserve in Fifeshire, Scotland. When these Lincolnshire specimens were sent to Dr. A.F.Millidge for examination, he opined that they were not M.trifrons and no further action was taken until the Winterton specimens were discovered, when it was found that they were similar to those from Lincolnshire. Mr. Whatmough's specimens have been

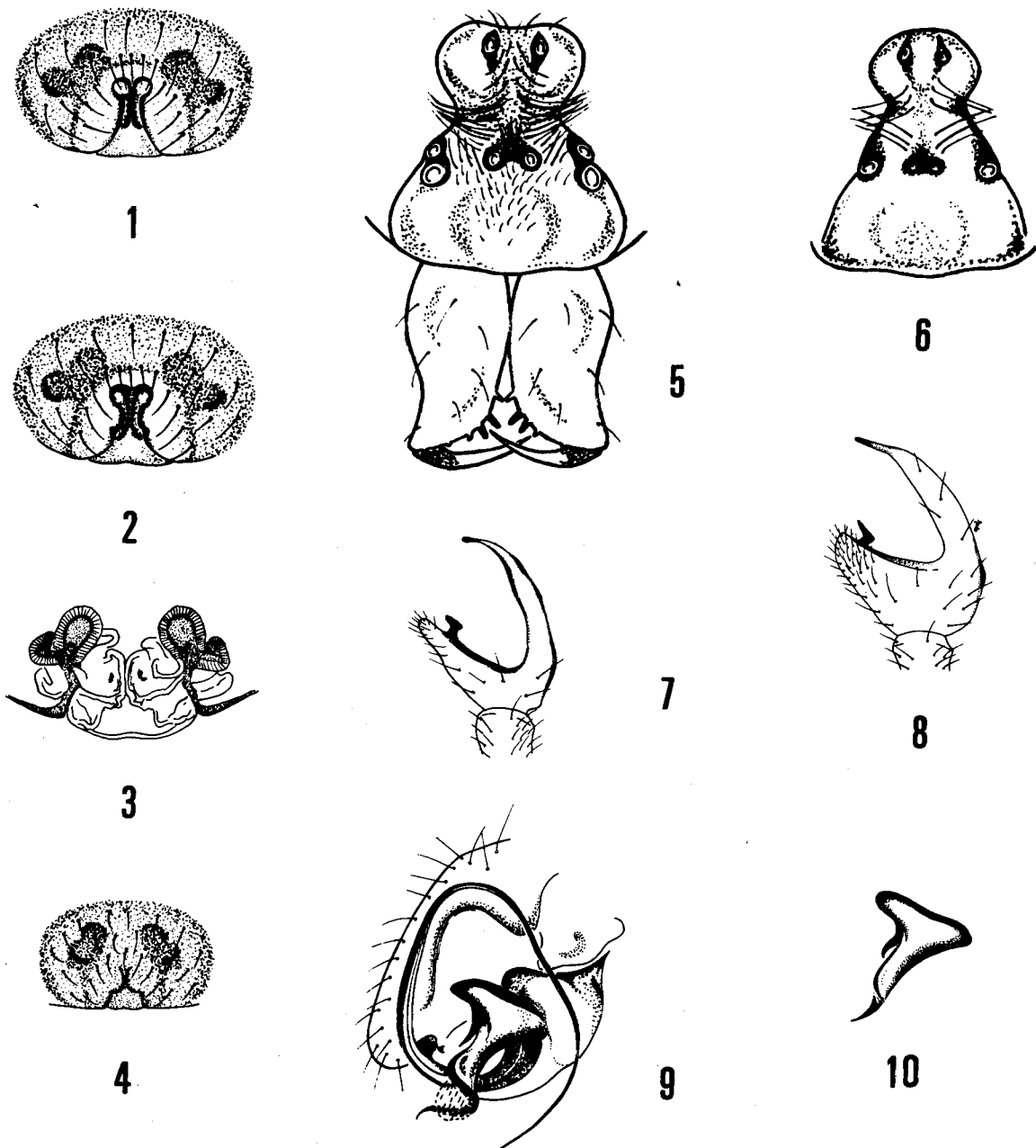


Figure 1. Minyrioloides maritimus epigyne (holotype) (x94)
 2. M. maritimus epigyne (another specimen) (x94)
 3. M. maritimus vulva (dorsal view) (x89)
 4. M. trifrons epigyne (x108)
 5. M. maritimus male head and chelicerae (seen from front) (x80)
 6. M. trifrons male head (seen from front) (x80)
 7. Male left palpal tibia M. maritimus (x94)
 8. Male left palpal tibia M. trifrons (x94)
 9. Embolic part of left palp M. maritimus showing tegular apophysis (x94)
 10. Tegular apophysis (left palp) M. trifrons (x94)

seen by us and are therefore the first to be taken.

M.maritimus has since been recorded from the following additional coastal localities in Norfolk. Holm Nature Reserve (TF707449), Scolt Head National Nature Reserve (TF792467), Holkham Dunes Nature Reserve (TF858459), Holkham Gap Dunes (TF891452) and Blakeney Point Nature Reserve (TG000462).

Holotypes have been selected from the June 1969 material, collected at Winterton, and have been deposited in the arachnological collections at the British Museum (Natural History), together with a series of paratypes. Other specimens are held in our own and other private collections.

Description: LENGTH: ♀ 2.2 - 2.6 mm. ♂ 1.7 - 2.1 mm. CARAPACE: Deep brown with darker radiating striations. ♂ head elevated into a large lobe (Fig. 5), carrying the posterior median eyes and bearing long curved hairs anteriorly. When viewed from the front, and compared with M.trifrons (Fig. 6), the lobe will be seen to be wider and more deeply indented at the sides. EYES: ♀ posterior medians less than one diam. apart and slightly less than one diam. from laterals. ♂ posterior medians borne on the cephalic lobe and separated by a little more than twice their width. CHELICERAE: Without stridulating ridges. STERNUM: Brown, suffused with black and sparsely covered with hairs. ABDOMEN: Dark grey, with four reddish impressed dots, Narrow in front, rounded and projecting over the carapace anteriorly. Posterior end broader than anterior end, tapering sharply to the point at spinners. ♀ living specimens rather flattened in appearance, particularly after egg laying. LEGS: Tm I 0.8. Uniform orange-yellow. Tibial spines 2-2-1-1. EPIGYNE: Figs. 1 & 2. Variable. Vulva Fig. 3. The epigyne is quite easily distinguished from that of M.trifrons (Fig. 4). MALE PALP: Figs. 7 & 9. Similar to M.trifrons (Figs. 8 & 10) but clearly separated by the following points. Both branches of the palpal tibia are more slender and the upper branch more angular. The tegular apophysis takes the form of a much more pronounced helix than in M.trifrons.

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