

**A NEW MEGALEPTHYPHANTES WUNDERLICH 1994  
(ARANEAE: LINYPHIIDAE FROM A CAVE OF CRETE (GREECE))**

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**Abstract:** A single male of a new spider species, probably belonging to the genus *Megalepthyphantes* WUNDERLICH 1994, *M. minotaur* **n. sp.** (Araneae: Linyphiidae: Micronetinae) is described from a cave of Crete, Greece.

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**Introduction:** The Palaearctic genus *Megalepthyphantes* WUNDERLICH 1994 at present contains 15 large sized well-coloured species with the centre of diversity in the Mediterranean and Central Asia. Below a strange male with some troglobiont features is regarded with some hesitation as a member of *Megalepthyphantes*.

**Abbreviations:** E = embolus, EP = embolus proper, L = lamella characteristica, MP = membraneous process of the terminal apophysis, R = radix, RA = radix apophysis, SS = special spine, T = tooth of the embolus, Th = thumb.

The terminology of the genital structures follows SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH (1996). The sequence of leg segment measurements is as follows: femur + patella + tibia + metatarsus + tarsus. All measurements in mm.

**?*Megalephyphantes minotaur* n. sp.** (figs. 1-7)

**Etymology:** The species name, a noun apposition, is taken from the mythical monster, living in a cave of Crete.

**Material:** Greece, Crete, cave, Nida plateau, Tripa, Mithia Kavatura, male holotype leg. HARALD MIXANIG 4. VIII 2000; sent to JW by V. BRACHAT, coll. J. WUNDERLICH R158/AR/CJW, later most probably Senckenberg, Frankfurt a. M. (SMF).

**Diagnosis** (♂; ♀ unknown): The species is well distinguished from other congeners by some troglobiont features, an unmodified pedipalpal patella, the shape of cymbium and paracymbium as well as by the peculiar shape of the embolus.

**Description** (♂): The specimen is in a bad condition: several leg articles and bristles are lost. Body and legs very pale. Body length 2.5; prosoma: Length 1.2, width 1.0, unmodified, cephalic part slightly elevated, bearing several bent bristles. Eight eyes small (reduced), with dark margins. Chelicerae 0.5 long, anterior margin of the fang furrow with three stout teeth. Legs long, thin and pale. Length of leg I 7.9 (2.1 + 0.4 + 2.2 + 2.0 + 1.2), length of leg IV 7.15 (1.95 + 0.3 + 1.95 + 1.9 + 1.05). Chaetotaxy unclear, most bristles lost, metatarsus I-IV with a dorsal bristle, tibiae with lateral bristles and probably without ventral bristles. Position of the metatarsal trichobothria unknown. Pedipalpus (figs. 1-7): patella unmodified, bearing a long and bent dorsal bristle. Cymbium unmodified, without posterodorsal outgrowth. Paracymbium relatively large, toothless, posterior pocket reduced, anterior and apical pockets merged. Lamella characteristica short, wide and strongly sclerotized. Embolus with a hump-like retrolateral outgrowth, and three narrow, long, pointed and spear-shaped apophyses on terminal apophysis side, hidden by one of its narrow and long membraneous process. Thumb very large, with a tooth-like apophysis near its base, T in figs. 1 and 6. Terminal apophysis with a small and well sclerotized part and two flanked membraneous processes, MP 1 and 2 in figs. 1 and 4. Radix boat-shaped, proximal part bearing a short pointed radical apophysis. Fickert's gland large, globular. Opisthosoma 1.4 long, 0.95 wide, white, dorsal pattern absent.

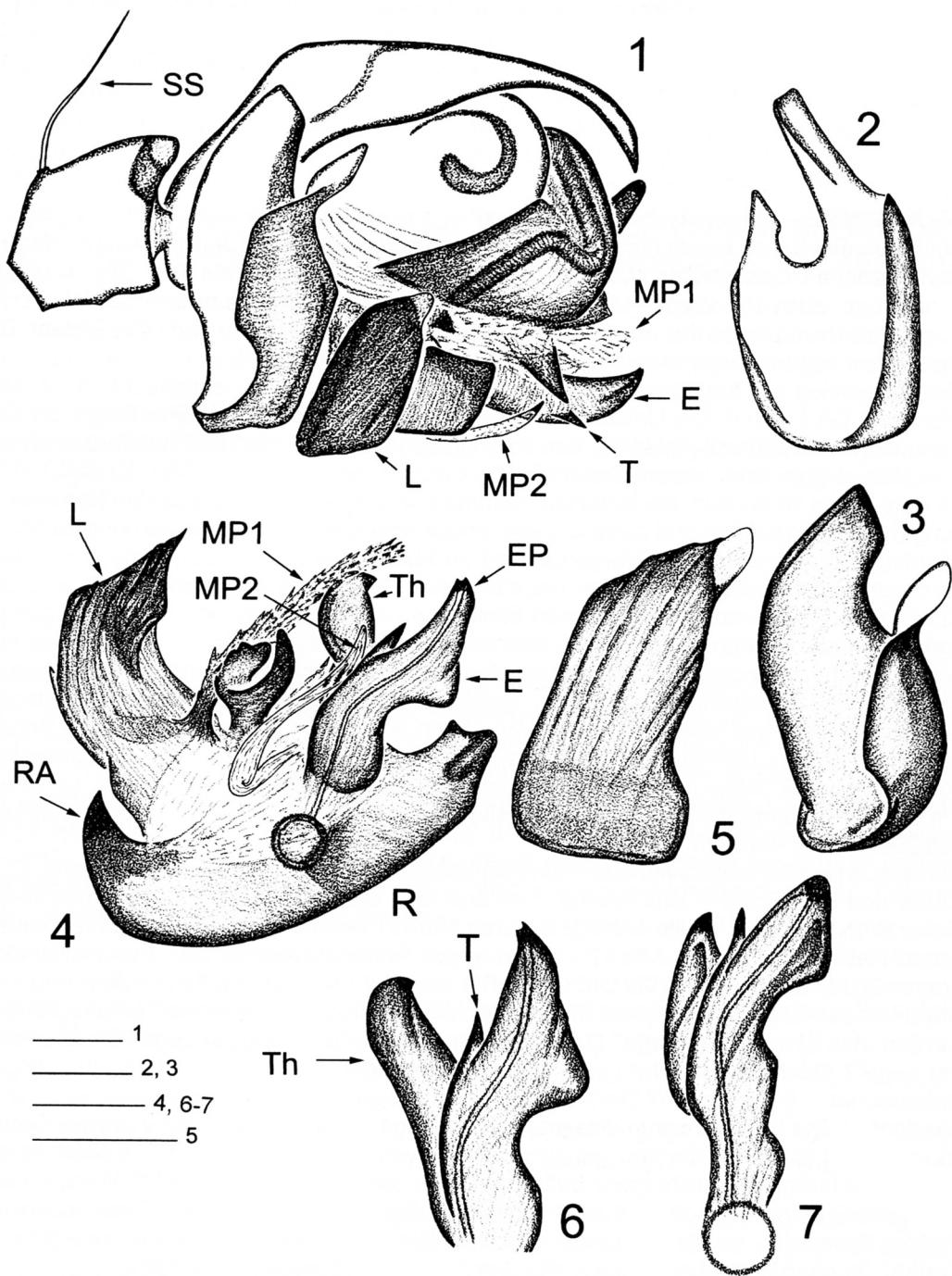
**Relationships:** The pedipalpal conformation is similar in general to that of *Megalephyphantes* but several peculiarities in the structures of the pedipalpus, as well as the absence of the conspecific female makes its taxonomic position unclear; so the species

is placed provisionally in *Megalephyphantes*. It may be regarded as the member of an undescribed genus; the discovery of the unknown female may help to solve this question. In the majority of the species of *Megalephyphantes*, including the type species *nebulosus* (SUNDEVALL 1830), the embolus is peculiar in shape and looks like a sea-horse, see BOSMANS (2006: 182, fig. 21), TANASEVITCH (2009a: 399, fig. 44), TANASEVITCH (2009b: 424, fig. 3). In contrast, in *minotaur* the embolus has a large thumb and is very similar to that of *Mughiphantes* SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH 1999, *Bolyphantes* C. L. KOCH 1837 and *Poecilonea* KULCZYNSKI 1894, see SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH (1999, 2000). The boat-shaped radix is also similar in the genera mentioned above. Besides this character the new species differs from *Megalephyphantes* congeners by having only a single special spine on an unmodified pedipalpal patella, by the unarmed and simple paracymbium and by the existence of the apophysis of the radix. Furthermore certain trogllobiont features distinguishes the new species from congeners: the very pale body and legs, absence of markings of pro- and opisthosoma, reduced eyes as well as long and slender legs.

**Distribution:** Crete (Greece).

## References

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Figs. 1-7: ?*Megalepthyphantes minotaur* n. sp., ♂, right pedipalpus; 1) retrolateral aspect; 2-3) different aspects of the paracymbium; 4) embolic division; 5) lamella characteristica, 6-7) different aspects of the embolus. – Scale bars 0.1 mm.