

**A new micronetine genus proposed for the
tchatkalensis species-group of *Lepthyphantes* MENGE (sensu lato)
(Arachnida: Araneae: Linyphiidae: Micronetinae)**

With 56 figures and 2 maps

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Abstract. A new genus, *Tchatkalophantes* gen. n., the type species: *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis* TANASEVITCH, 1983, is proposed for the *tchatkalensis* species-group of *Lepthyphantes* s. l. This Central Asian genus is composed at least of seven species, four of which are described as new: *Tchatkalophantes tarabaevi* sp. n., *T. karatau* sp. n., both from Kazakhstan, *T. kungei* sp. n., from Kirghizia, and *T. mongolicus* sp. n., from Mongolia. The female of *T. rupeus* TANASEVITCH, 1986 is described for the first time.

Key words. Araneae, Linyphiidae, Micronetinae, *Lepthyphantes*, new genus, new species, taxonomy, Central Asia.

Introduction

Based on secondary genital morphology, the spider genus *Lepthyphantes* MENGE, 1868 has recently been reassessed and shown to be restricted to five species only (SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH 1996). For some of the species-groups created earlier within this genus, new genera have steadily been established. Now the time has come to revise the *tchatkalensis*-group.

It was first proposed by SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH (1993) for *Bolyphantes hyperauritus* LOKSA, 1965, *B. mongolicus* LOKSA, 1965, *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis* TANASEVITCH, 1983, and *L. rupeus* TANASEVITCH, 1986. Later, *B. hyperauritus* was confirmed by WUNDERLICH (1995) as representing a member of *Lepthyphantes*, while the allocation of *B. mongolicus* LOKSA, 1965 in *Bolyphantes* C. L. KOCH, 1837 was reconfirmed by SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH (2000). So the *tchatkalensis*-group of *Lepthyphantes* s. l. currently consists of three species: *L. hyperauritus*, *L. rupeus*, and *L. tchatkalensis*.

Studies on some older material from Middle Asia, in the Zoological Museum of the Moscow State University (ZMMU) and some personal collections, as well as freshly collected samples from Kazakhstan and Mongolia, have revealed four new species from the *tchatkalensis*-group, all described here. Besides, a new genus has been erected to better outline the entire species-group.

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Material, abbreviations and acknowledgements

This paper is based mainly on material collected in different parts of Kazakhstan by the late Dr. Ch. TARABAEV (Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan) and Dr. A. GROMOV (Alma-Ata), as well as in Mongolia by Dr. Yu. MARUSIK (Magadan, Russia). In addition, samples from the personal collection of Dr. J. WUNDERLICH (Staubenhardt, Germany) and from my personal collection have been used. Also, some of the ZMMU spider holdings pertaining to this contribution have been revised.

Abbreviations used in the text and figures: TA – terminal apophysis, L – lamella characteristic, E – embolus, EP – embolus proper, R – radix, RA – radical apophysis, PS – “pseudoscape”, PMP – posterior median plate, S – stretcher. Tm I – position of the metatarsal trichobothrium. The chaetotaxy is given in the following formula: Ti I: 2-1-1-0. This stands for: tibia I has two dorsal, one pro- and one retro-lateral spine, ventral spines absent (the apical spines are herewith disregarded). The sequence of leg segments in measurement data is as follows: femur + patella + tibia + metatarsus + tarsus. All measurements are given in mm. Scale bar = 0.1 mm.

ZMMU – the Zoological Museum of the Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia; JWC – personal collection of Dr. J. WUNDERLICH (Straubenhardt, Germany); ATC – personal collection of Dr. A. TANASEVITCH (Moscow, Russia); YMC – personal collection of Dr. Yu. MARUSIK (Magadan, Russia).

Type specimens have been deposited in the collections of ZMMU and ATC.

Acknowledgements. I am greatly obliged to all persons whose materials have been used here, including Dr. Jörg WUNDERLICH, who sent me material of *Lepthyphantes hyperauritus* LOKSA, 1965, and Dr. Yuri MARUSIK for his samples from Mongolia, both these gentlemen specially contributing to this project. I wish to thank Mr. Tamás SZÜTS (Budapest, Hungary) for certain information on the KASZAB Collection.

Description of the new taxa

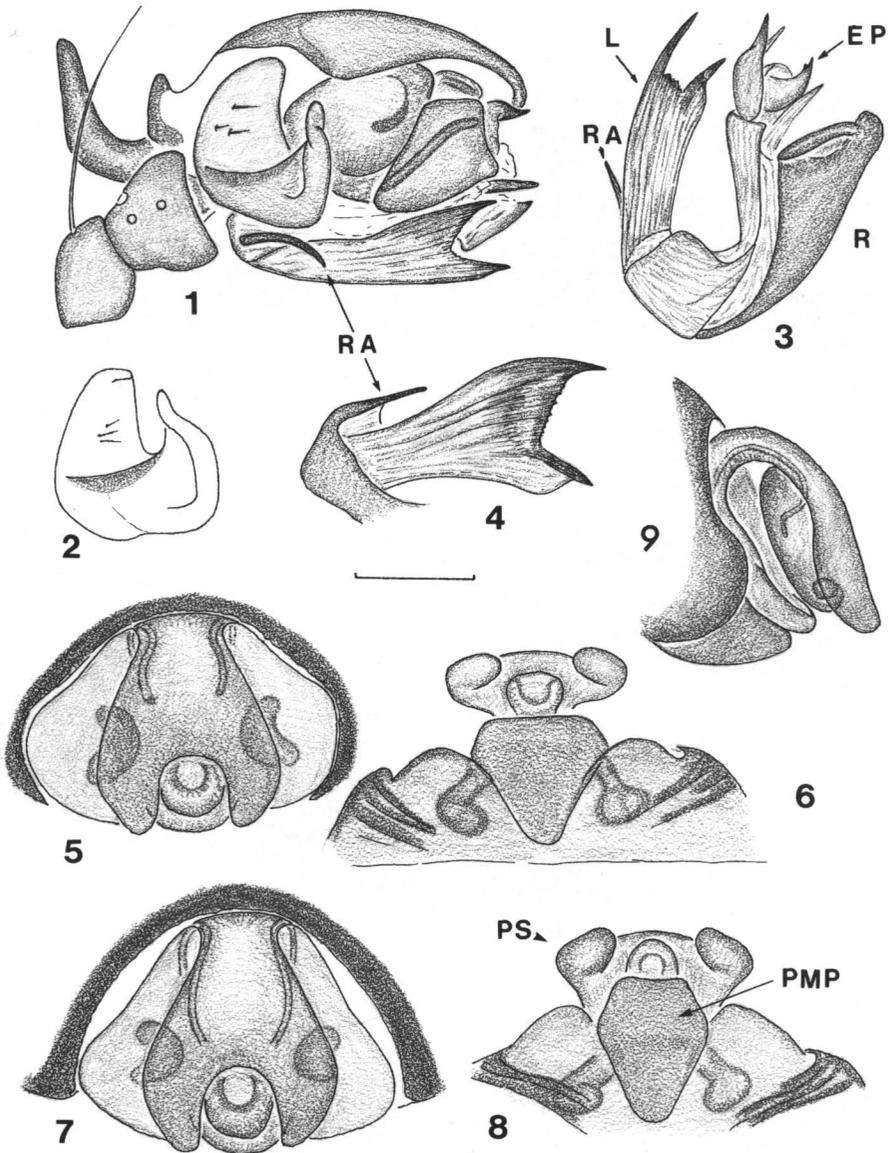
Tchatkalophantes TANASEVITCH, gen. n. (maps 1, 2)

Type species: *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis* TANASEVITCH, 1983

Name. The generic name is derived from the *tchatkalensis* species-group and the generic name *Lepthyphantes*.

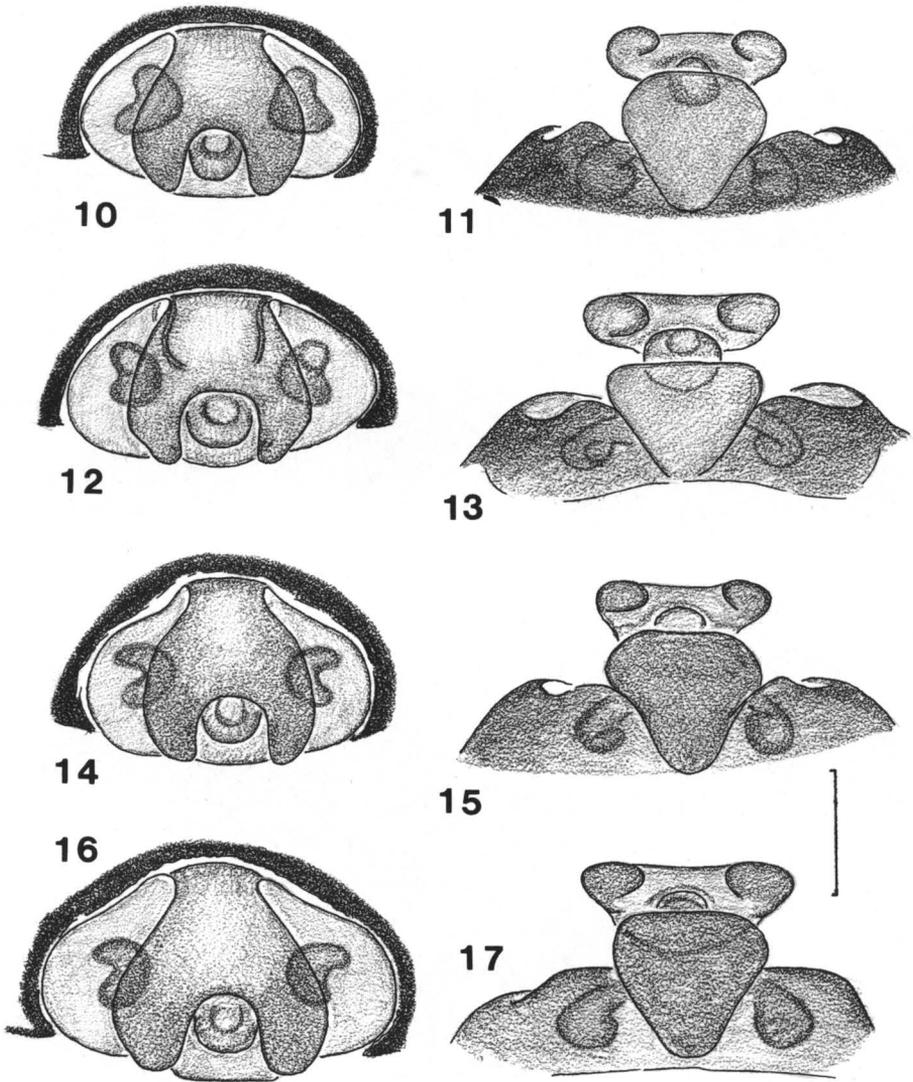
Diagnosis. Members of the new genus can be quite easily recognized by the very long basal process of the male palpal cymbium, by the open aperture of the female epigyne, with a scapus modified, with both median and distal parts strongly reduced, as well as by the hypertrophied shield-shaped “pseudoscape”.

Description. Small and medium sized micronetids, total length 1.50–2.60. Carapace and legs yellow to pale brown. Chaetotaxy: Ti I: 2-1-1-0, II: 2-0-1-0, III–IV: 2-0-0-0; Mt I–IV: 1-0-0-0. Metatarsi I–III with a trichobothrium. Tm I: 0.22–0.25. Male palp. Cymbium with a long and usually narrow basal process. Paracymbium relatively large, toothless. Radix with a long radical apophysis starting at base of lamella characteristic. Latter large and wide, embolus small, membranous, with a bifid apex. Epigyne aperture open: lateral walls of epigynal cavity strongly reduced. Scape with a narrow proximal part, both median and distal parts as well as lateral lobes reduced, processes of dorsal surface of scape (fig. 56) forming a shield-shaped “pseudoscape” superficially corresponding to a proscape (see SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH 1996, fig. 7B: ps). Stretcher well-developed. Posterior median plate uniform, usually not hypertrophied. Dorsal abdominal pattern highly variable, even in different samples of the same species, from two white spots over a black background to a grey median stripe, sometimes fir-tree in shape, and spots over a pale background.



Figs 1–9: *Tchatkalophantes tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH, 1983), male holotype and female paratypes from Chatkal River Valley: 1 – right palp, 2 – paracymbium, 3 – embolic division, 4 – lamella characteristica and part of radix, 5, 7 – epigyne: 5, 7 – ventral view, 6, 8 – dorsal view, 9 – lateral view.

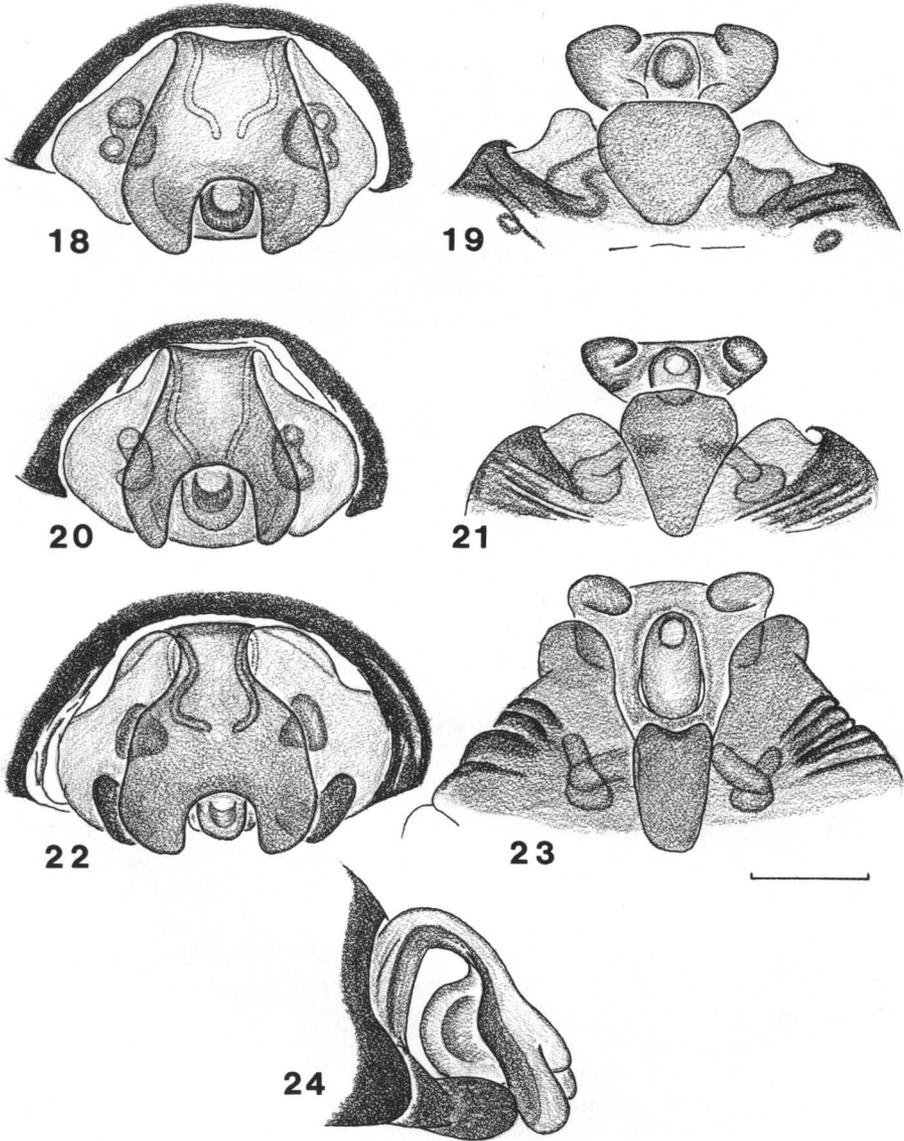
Taxonomic remarks. This genus is a member of the subfamily Micronetinae. The scape structure could be derived from the *mughi*-type (SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH 1999: fig. 1A) by extending the distal part of the proscape and forming a shield-shaped “pseudoscape”. Such a kind of structure of the scape, as well as the reduced cavity walls, seem “good” synapomorphies of this genus.



Figs 10–17: Epigyne of *Tchatkalophantes tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH, 1983) from Tadjikistan, Khovaling: 10,12,14,16 – ventral view, 11,13,15,17 – dorsal view.

Composition and distribution. The new genus can be treated as a montane Central Asian faunal element (see maps 1 & 2) distributed in the Tien-Shang Mts, Pamir-Alai Mts, the mountains of northern Mongolia, and in the Mongolian Gobi Altai Mts. Currently it consists of seven species: *Tchatkalophantes tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH, 1983), *T. hyperauritus* (LOKSA, 1965), *T. rupeus* (TANASEVITCH, 1986), all comb. n. from *Leptyphantes*, as well as *T. tarabaevi* sp. n., *T. karatau* sp. n., *T. kungei* sp. n., and *T. mongolicus* sp. n.

Ecology. Members of this genus live in xerobiotic habitats, occurring among/under stones on dry slopes, in cavities, micro caverns, etc.



Figs 18–24: Epigyne of *Tchatkalophantes tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH, 1983) (18,19 – from Kirghizia, Malinovoye Valley, 20,21 – from Kirghizia, Yarodar) and *T. kungei* sp. n., holotype (22–24): 18,20,22 – ventral view, 19,21,23 – dorsal view, 24 – lateral view.

Tchatkalophantes tchatkalensis (TANASEVITCH, 1983), **comb. n.** (figs 1–21, map 1)

1983: *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis* TANASEVITCH, Zool. zhurn. **62** (12): 1790, figs (m, f) (revised).
 1989: *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis*. – TANASEVITCH, Senckenbergiana biol. **69**, 1/3: 111 (part, revised).

Material: 3 females (ATC), Tadjikistan, West Pamir Mts, Kughi-Ten Mt. Ridge, environs of Khovaling [10], 1500 m, 11.X.1993, leg. S. OVTCHINNIKOV (**new record**).

Remarks. Originally, this species has been described from Uzbekistan (West Tien-Shang Mts) (TANASEVITCH 1983) and later reported from the Kirghizsky Mt. Ridge, Kirghizia (North Tien-Shang Mts) (TANASEVITCH 1989). The record of this species in the Issyk-Kul Area (TANASEVITCH 1989, 111: N-Tien-Shang Mts, Kungei-Alatau Mt. Ridge) is erroneous. In fact it refers to a new species, *T. kungei* sp. n. (see below).

Distribution. UZBEKISTAN: West Tien-Shang Mts, Chatkalsky Mt. Ridge, mouth of Chatkal River [7], 1050-1100 m; KIRGHIZIA: Sary-Chelek State Reserve [8], 1500 m; West Tien-Shang Mts, Ferghansky Mt. Ridge, Yarodar [9], 1400 m; North Tien-Shang Mts, Kirghizsky Mt. Ridge, Malinovoye Valley [6], 1700-2000 m; TADJIKISTAN: West Pamir Mts, Kughi-Ten Mt. Ridge, Khovaling [10], 1500 m.

Taxonomic remarks. The posterior median plate of this species seems to display two different shape types: *a*-type (fig. 6) and *b*-type (fig. 8). Usually, both co-occur in some populations. On the other hand, it is quite possible that each of the types actually corresponds to a different allopatric species. Unfortunately, the material at hand is too limited to allow for a more exact assumption.

***Tchatkalophantes rupeus* (TANASEVITCH, 1986) comb. n.** (figs 25-31, map 1)

1986: *Lepthyphantes rupeus* TANASEVITCH, Senckenbergiana biol. **67** (1/3): 158, figs (male) (revised).

Remarks. This species has hitherto been known by a single male from N-Tien-Shang Mts: Chyu-Ili Mts (TANASEVITCH 1986).

Material: 1 male, 1 female, Kazakhstan, North Tien-Shang Mts., Djambul Area, Kurdai Distr., Chyu-Ili Mts, ca. 10 km SW of Kurdai [4], 1100 m, 20.IV.1997, leg. A. GROMOV (**new record**).

Description. Female. Total length – 1.90. Carapace 0.75 long, 0.53 wide, pale brown. Chelicerae 0.38 long. Legs pale brown. Leg I lacks, IV – 3.51 long (1.00 + 0.23 + 0.85 + 0.88 + 0.55). Chaetotaxy. Ti I: 2-1-1-0, II: 2-0-1-0, III-IV: 2-0-0-0; Mt I-IV: 1-0-0-0. Abdomen 1.15 long, 0.60 wide, almost black with several pale spots dorsally. Epigyne as in Figs 29-31. This is the first description of a female of this species.

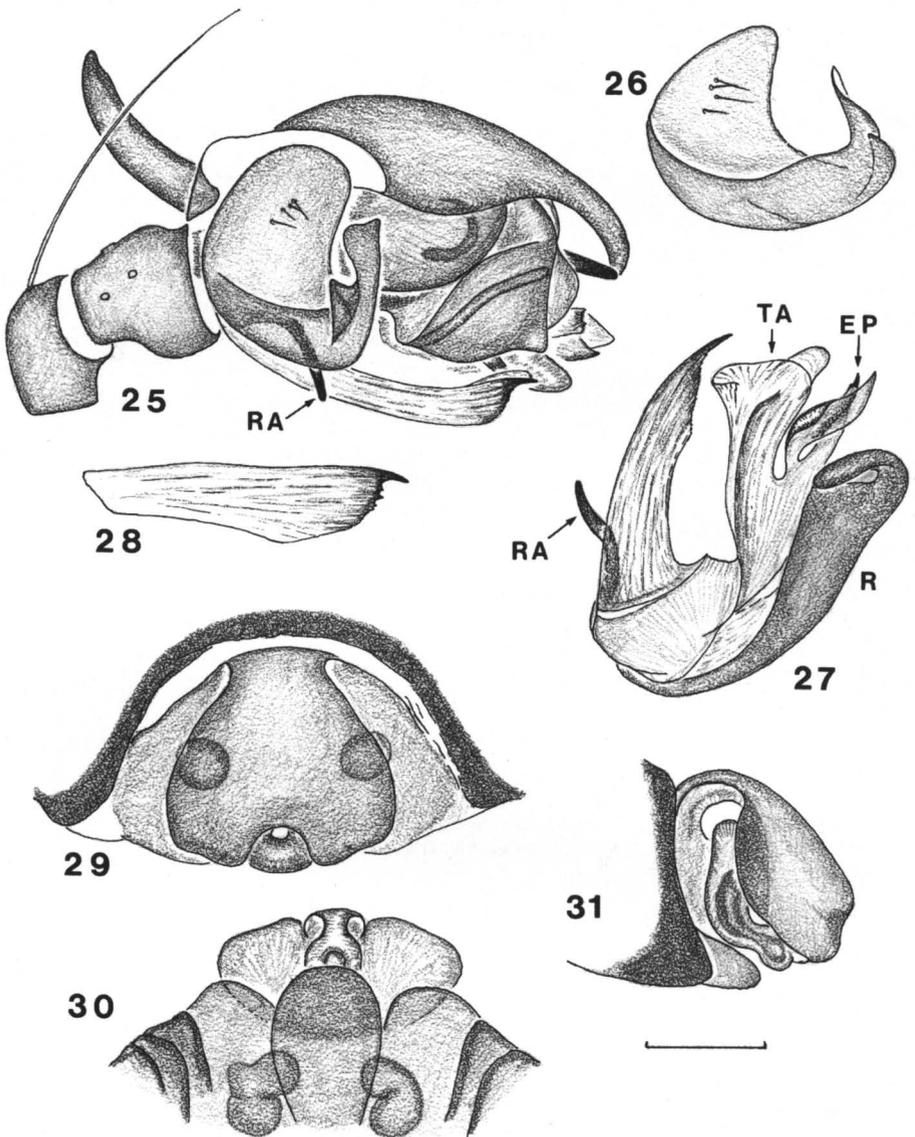
Taxonomic remarks. This species is very closely related to *Tchatkalophantes tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH, 1983), but differs by the not so large archer of the basal cymbial process, the absence of a lower apical pointed spire in the lamella characteristica, as well as by the small distal emargination of the “pseudoscape”.

Distribution. KAZAKHSTAN: North Tien-Shang Mts, Chyu-Ili Mts: Kurdai [4], 1000-1100 m.

***Tchatkalophantes kungei* sp. n.** (figs 22-24, map 1)

1989: *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis*. – TANASEVITCH, Senckenbergiana biol. **69**, 1/3: 111 (part: from Cholpon-Ata Valley) (revised).

Holotype: female (ZMMU), Kirghizia, North Tien-Shang Mts, Kungei-Alatau Mt. Ridge, Cholpon-Ata Valley [5], 2000-2500 m, *Picea* forest, litter, 6.V.1983, leg. S. OVTCHINNIKOV.



Figs 25–31: *Thatchalophantes rupeus* (TANASEVITCH, 1986) from Kazakhstan, Kurdai: 25 – right palp, 26 – paracymbium, 27 – embolic division, 28 – lamella characteristica, 29–31 epigyne: 29 – ventral view, 30 – dorsal view, 31 – lateral view.

N a m e . The specific name refers to the type locality.

R e m a r k s . Earlier, this species has erroneously been treated by the author as *Lepthyphantes tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH 1989, 111: Kirghizia: Cholpon-Ata Valley).

D i a g n o s i s . The new species is easily recognizable by the very small posterior median plate, and by the well-expressed, paired, integumental outgrowths in the posterior part of the epigyne.

Description. Female (male unknown). Total length – 1.98. Carapace 0.90 long, 0.70 wide, yellow. Chelicerae 0.38 long. Legs yellow. Leg I – 4.27 long (1.13+0.28+1.08+1.03+0.75), IV – 3.82 long (1.13+0.25+0.93+0.93+0.58). Chaetotaxy. Ti I: 2-1-1-0, II: 2-0-1-0, III–IV: 2-0-0-0; Mt I–IV: 1-0-0-0. Tm I – 0.23. Abdomen 1.63 long, 1.00 wide, dorsally pale with a dark grey median stripe. Epigyne as in figs. 22–24.

Taxonomic remarks. This species is close to *T. karatau* sp. n. but differs by the well-expressed integumental outgrowths in the posterior part of the epigyne, as well as by the shorter stretcher.

Distribution. KIRGHIZIA, North Tien-Shang Mts, Kungei-Alatau Mt. Ridge, Cholpon-Ata Valley [5], 2000–2500 m.

***Tchatkalophantes karatau* sp. n.** (figs 32–36, map 1)

Holotype: female (ZMMU), Kazakhstan, West Tien-Shang Mts, Chimkent Area, Suzak Distr., Karatau Mt. Ridge, upper reaches of Kokbulak River [1] (S of Suzak), 1000 m, 22.IV.1988, leg. Ch. TARABAEV. **Paratype:** 1 female (ATC), Suzak Distr., Karatau Mt. Ridge, valley near Zhunys [2], 700 m, 23.IV.1988, leg. Ch. TARABAEV.

Name. The specific epithet refers to the type locality.

Diagnosis. By the shape of both posterior median plate and “pseudoscape”, this species is close to *T. kungei* sp. n., but differs in the absence of well-expressed integumental outgrowths in the posterior part of the epigyne.

Description. Female (male unknown). Total length – 2.55. Carapace 0.95 long, 0.68 wide, yellow. Chelicerae 0.40 long. Legs yellow. Leg I – 4.27 long (1.15 + 0.28 + 1.13 + 1.00 + 0.71), IV – 3.93 long (1.13 + 0.28 + 0.95 + 0.94 + 0.63). Chaetotaxy. Ti I: 2-1-1-0, II: 2-0-1-0, III–IV: 2-0-0-0; Mt I–IV: 1-0-0-0. Tm I – 0.22. Abdomen 1.63 long, 1.00 wide, dorsally pale with a dark grey median stripe. Epigyne as in figs 32–36.

Taxonomical remarks. This species is close to *T. kungei* sp. n. (see above).

Distribution. KAZAKHSTAN: West Tien-Shang Mts, Karatau Mts [1, 2], 700-1000m.

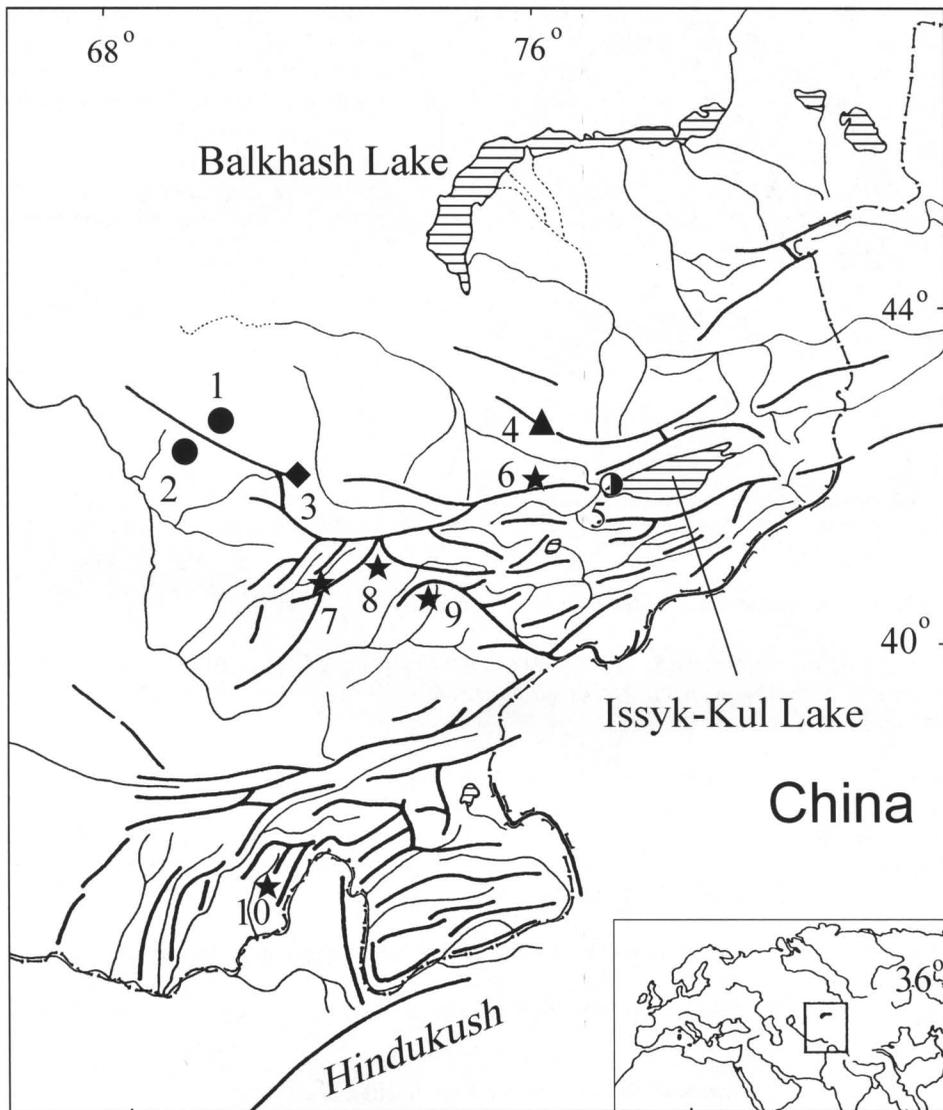
***Tchatkalophantes tarabaevi* sp. n.** (figs 37–39, map 1)

Holotype: female (ZMMU), Kazakhstan, West Tien-Shang Mts, Chimkent Area, Tyulkubas Distr., Karatau Mt. Ridge, Kulan River Valley [3], slope, ca. 1000 m, 12.IV.1984, leg. Ch. TARABAEV.

Name. Honours the late Kazakh arachnologist, the collector of this species, Dr. Chingis K. TARABAEV.

Diagnosis. This species can be distinguished from congeners by the rather shallow emargination in the distal part of the “pseudoscape”, the emargination being flanked by two small knobs.

Description. Female (male unknown). Total length – 2.30. Carapace 0.85 long, 0.65 wide, pale brown with darker margin. Chelicerae 0.40 long. Leg I 3.89 long (1.03 + 0.28 + 1.00 + 0.95 + 0.63), IV – 3.50 long (1.00 + 0.23 + 0.89 + 0.85 + 0.53). Chaetotaxy. Ti I: 2-1-1-0, II: 2-0-1-0,

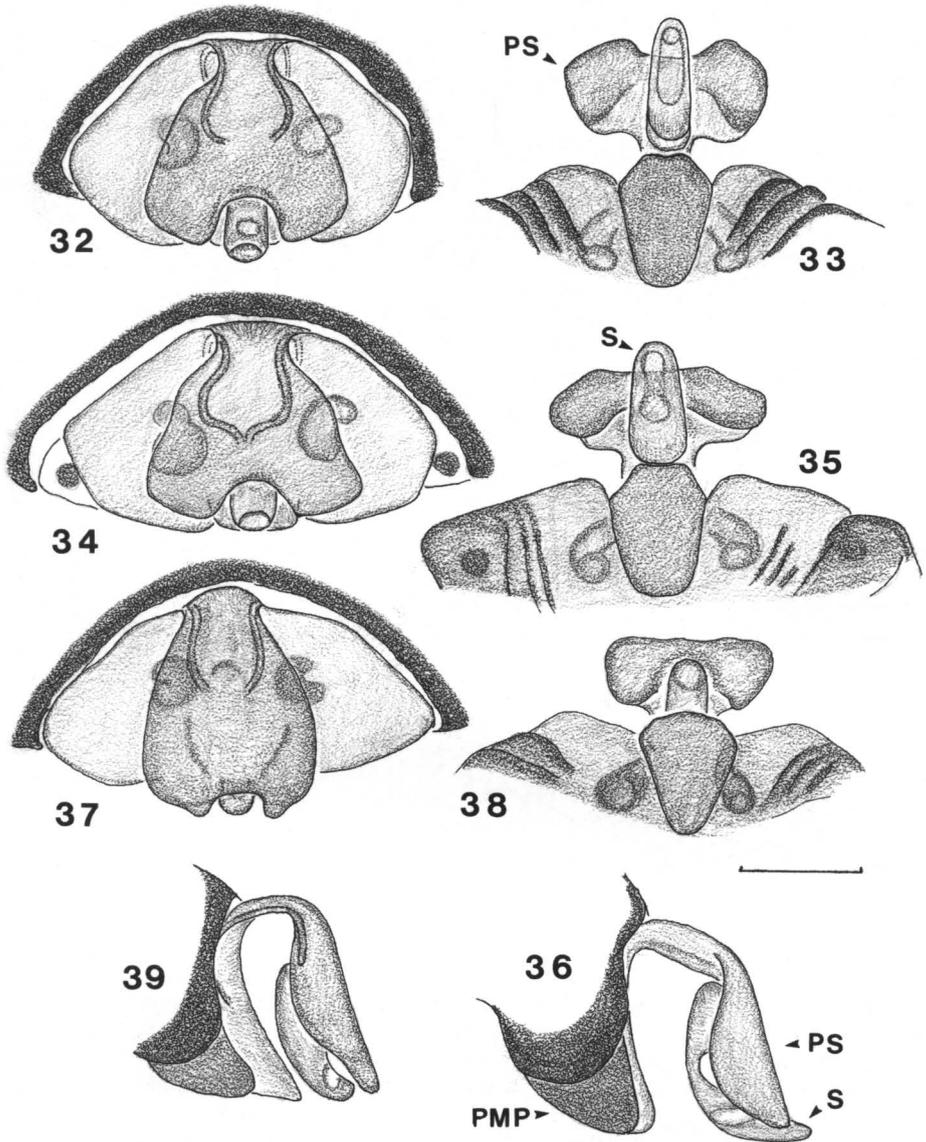


Map 1: Distribution of the genus *Thatkalophantes* gen. n. in Central Asia. ● – *Thatkalophantes karatau* sp. n., ◆ – *T. tarabaevi* sp. n., ▲ – *T. rupeus* (TANASEVITCH, 1986), ○ – *T. kungei* sp. n., ★ – *T. tchatkalensis* (TANASEVITCH, 1983), *T. mongolicus* sp. n.

Localities. Karatau Mt. Ridge: 1 – Kokbulak River, 2 – Zhunys, 3 – Kulan River Valley; Chyu-Ili Mts.: 4 – Kurdai; Kungei-Alatau Mt. Ridge: 5 – Cholpon-Ata Valley; Kirghizsky Mt. Ridge: 6 – Malinovoye Valley; Chatkalsky Mt. Ridge: 7 – mouth of Chatkal River, 8 – Sary-Chelek State Reserve; Fergansky Mt. Ridge: 9 – Yarodar; Kughi-Ten Mt. Ridge: 10 – Khovaling.

III–IV: 2-0-0-0; Mt I–IV: 1-0-0-0. TmI – 0.23. Abdomen 1.70 long, 0.65 wide, dorsally pale with a dark grey median stripe. Epigyne as in figs 37–39.

Taxonomic remarks. This species seems to be close to *tchatkalensis*, being easily distinguished by the shallow emargination in the distal part of the “pseudoscape”, the emargination being flanked by two small knobs.

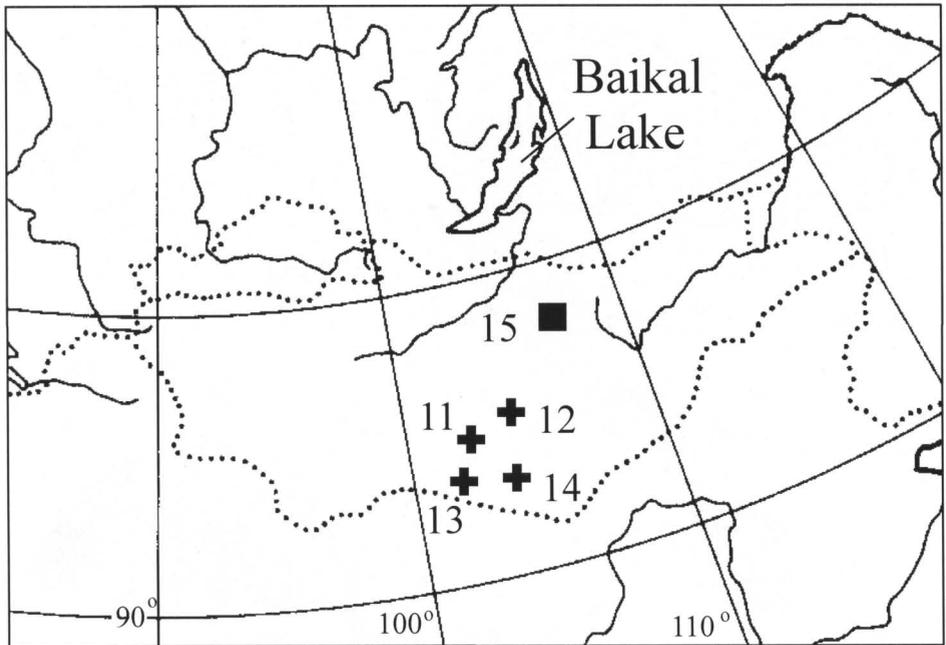


Figs 32–39: *Tchatkalophantes karatau* sp. n. (32,33,36 – paratype, 34,35 – holotype), and *T. tarabaevi* sp. n. (37–39): 32,34,37 – ventral view, 33,35,38 – dorsal view, 36,39 – lateral view.

Distribution. KAZAKHSTAN: West Tien-Shang Mts, Karatau Mt. Ridge, Kulan River Valley [3], 1000m.

Tchatkalophantes hyperauritus (LOKSA, 1965), **comb. n.** (figs 40–47, 50–56, map 2)

1965: *Bolyphantes hyperauritus* LOKSA, Reichenbachia Mus. Tierkde. Dresden 7 (1): 9, figs (male), type material inaccessible.



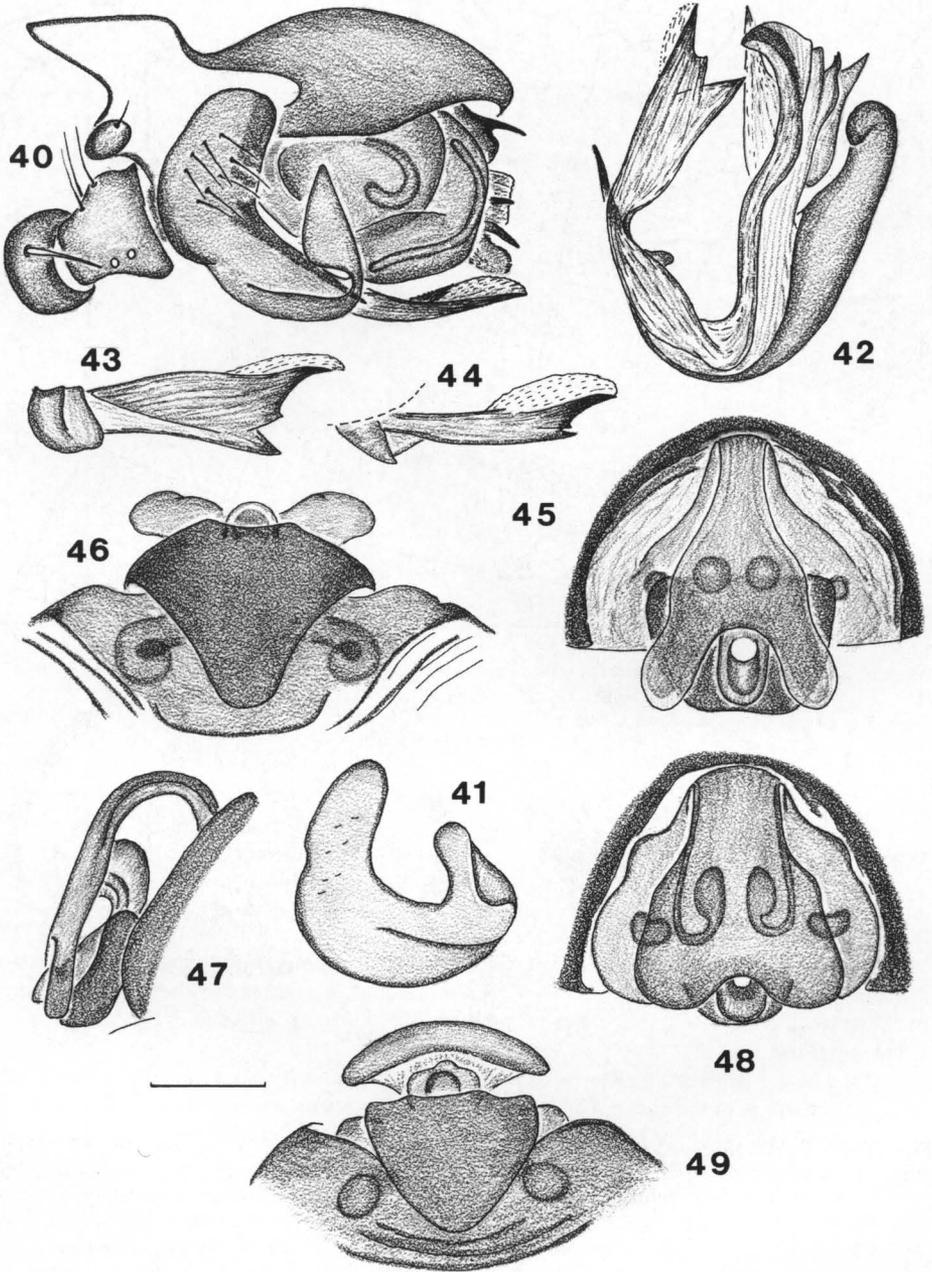
Map 2: Distribution of the genus *Tchatalophantes* gen. n. in Mongolia. ■ – *Tchatalophantes mongolicus* sp. n., + – *T. hyperauritus* (LOKSA, 1965). Localities. 11 – Somon Chovd, 12 – Somon Delgerchangaj, 13 – Gurvantes Somon, 14 – Bayandalai Somon.

1995: *Lepthyphantes hyperauritus* (sic!). – WUNDERLICH, Beiträge zur Araneologie 4: 486, figs (female) (revised).

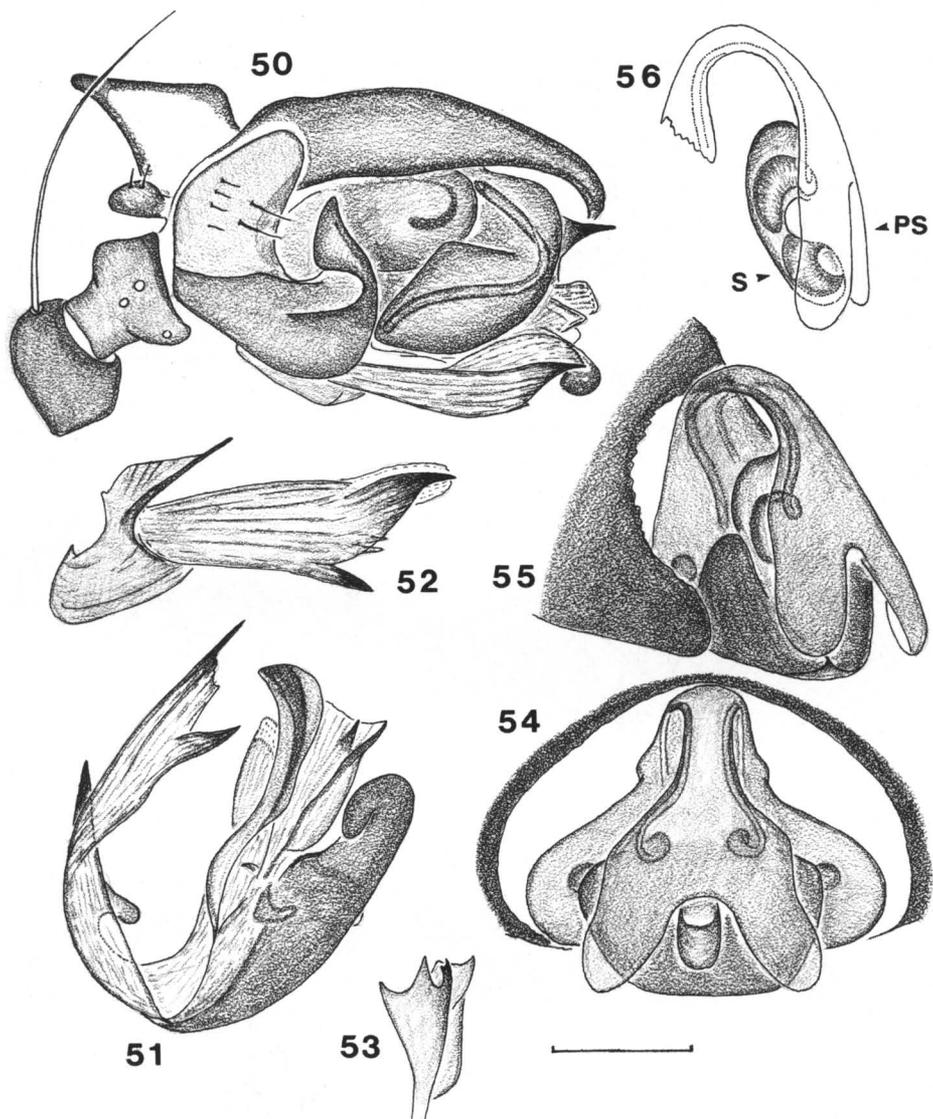
Remarks. Originally, this species has been described from a male from Mongolia (LOKSA 1965). Later, the female has also been described from that country, by WUNDERLICH (1995), who formally transferred *hyperauritus* to *Lepthyphantes* (though this had already been implicitly done by SAARISTO & TANASEVITCH, 1993) and mentioned its close affinities with the Central Asian *L. tchatkalensis*.

The shape of the lamella characteristica in the original figures by LOKSA (1965) differs a little from that observed in the above material in lacking a lower apical pointed spire. This variation can be explained either by LOKSA's having illustrated a single lamella characteristica not removed from the palp, in which case it is very hard to understand the right conformation of this sclerite, or by that LOKSA's material and that studied by WUNDERLICH and figured here as based on both WUNDERLICH's and fresh samples, indeed represent two different species. However, the first option seems more plausible, but only additional material from Mongolia might help to finally clarify this problem.

Material: 1 male, 1 female, Mongolia (KASZAB #786), Mittulgobi Aimak: Delgerchangaj ul, 6 km S von Somon Delgerchangaj (45°20'N, 104°45'E), 1650-1700 m, 11.VI.1967, aus 10 Ethylenglycol-Bodenfallen, eingegraben neben einem Wasserriss zwischen *Caragana* und *Amygdalus*. Aufgenommen am 10.VII.1967; 1 male (YMC), Mongolia, Omnogov Aimak, Gurvantes Somon, NW part of Sevreu Mt. Ridge (43°38'N, 101°08'E), 1900 m, 1.VI.1997, leg. Yu. MARUSIK (**new record**); 1 female (YMC), Mongolia, Omnogov Aimak, Bayandalai Somon, Zoolen Mt. Ridge (43°21'N, 103°11'E), 1700 m, 27-30.V.1997, leg. Yu. MARUSIK (**new record**).



Figs 40–49: *Tchatkalophantes hyperauritus* (LOKSA, 1965) (40–46), KASZAB Collection, 1967, (#786), *T. mongolicus* sp. n. (48–49): 40 – right palp, 41 – paracymbium, 42 – embolic division, 43, 44 – lamella characteristica, 45, 48 – ventral view, 46, 49 – dorsal view, 47 – lateral view.



Figs 50–56. *Tchatkalophantes hyperauritus* (LOKSA, 1965), MARUSIK Collection, 1997: 50 – right palp, 51 – embolic division, 52 – lamella characteristica and part of radix, 53 – embolus, 54,55 – epigyne, 54 – ventral view, 55 – ventro-lateral view, 56 – scape separately.

Taxonomic remarks. This species can easily be distinguished from other congeners by the keel-shaped basal cymbial process in the male palp, the deeply bifurcated “pseudoscape” in the female epigyne, as well as by the well-developed posterior median plate.

Distribution. MONGOLIA: Uburchangai Aimak, Somon Chovd [11], 1760 m (44°30' N, 102°20' E) (type locality), Mittलगobi aimak Somon Delgerchangaj [12], 1650–1700 m (45°20' N, 104°45' E), Omnogov Aimak, Gurvantes Somon [13], 1900 m (43°38' N, 101°08' E), Omnogov Aimak, Bayandalai Somon [14], 1700 m (43°21' N, 103°11' E).

Tchatkalophantes mongolicus sp. n. (figs 48–49, map 2)

Holotype: female (ZMMU), Mongolia, Tov Aimak, Bayankhangai Somon [15] (47°20'N, 105°24'E), 1200 m, 21–25.V.1997, leg. Yu. MARUSIK. **Paratype:** 1 female (ATC), same locality, together with holotype, leg. Yu. MARUSIK.

Name. The species is named after its type locality.

Diagnosis. The new species is characterized by the wide posterior median plate which a little narrower than the “pseudoscape”.

Description. Female (male unknown). Total length – 1.90. Carapace 0.75 long, 0.68 wide, pale brown. Chelicerae 0.38 long. Legs pale brown. Leg I 3.77 long (1.00 + 0.28 + 0.98 + 0.88 + 0.63), IV – 3.68 long (1.00 + 0.25 + 0.90 + 0.93 + 0.60). Chaetotaxy. Ti I: 2-1-1-0, II: 2-0-1-0, III–IV: 2-0-0-0; Mt I–IV: 1-0-0-0. Tml – 0.25. Abdomen 1.20 long, 0.88 wide, dorsally pale with dark grey tree-shaped median stripe. Epigyne as in figs 48, 49.

Taxonomic remarks. The new species seems to be close to *T. hyperauritus* but differs well by the shallow apical emargination of the “pseudoscape”, as well as by the less well-developed posterior median plate.

Distribution. MONGOLIA: Bayankhangai Somon [15] (47°20'N, 105°24'E), 1200 m.

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