

Abstract

The present attempt is to revise the Opiliones suborder Laniatores from India and to examine its diversity status in present scenario. In spite of being the fourth largest arachnid group in India, Opiliones have received very little attention. This work tries to revise the systematic account of the group based on both external morphology as well as the genital characters. There are total 80 species of Laniatores phalangids known from India, of which the thesis contains 27 species. Along with this it also gives a revisionary account of 4 species reported from localities outside India, considering the fact that these areas share some of the common fauna with India. This work also proposes 6 new genera and 14 new species from India raising the number of species from India to 94. It also describes one proposed new species, *Metassamiia dawnaensis* sp. nov, from Myanmar. There are six families of Laniatores: Oncopodidae, Trionyxellidae, Assamiidae, Podoctidae, Biantidae and Epedanidae, reported from India. General characters of all these families and generic key for each of them, has been provided.

The thesis proposes six new genera, *Ghatgharius*, *Buldhania*, *Neobunus*, *Roeweria*, *Neoscabrobunus* and *Dhenkanala*. The genus *Assaphalla* Martens, 1977 is reported for the first time from India with description of a new species *A. indicus*. The status of genus *Aboriscus* (Roewer, 1940) has been revised and transferred from family Epedanidae to Assamiidae. It also provides SEM (Scanning Electron Micrograph) pictures of genitalia of 15 species for better understanding of the genital morphology of the group. The present thesis work

describes 46 species of which 15 species are proposed to be new. It also presents an analysis of the Biogeography and distribution of Indian Laniatores.