

## SHORT COMMUNICATION

### The South American genus *Spintharidius* (Araneae, Araneidae)

**Herbert W. Levi:** Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, 26 Oxford Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138, USA. E-mail: levi@fas.harvard.edu

**Abstract.** The name *Madrepeira amazonica* Levi 1995 is a synonym of *Spintharidius rhomboidalis* Simon 1893. *Spintharidius* is currently monospecific.

**Keywords:** Spiders, orb-weavers, taxonomy, synonymy

Thirty years ago, while revising South American araneid spiders, I requested the holotypes of the two species of *Spintharidius* Simon 1893, *S. cerinus* Simon 1893, and *S. rhomboidalis* Simon 1893, from the Muséum Nationale d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. I was told that both species were listed in the catalog but the specimens were lost and remain so. The identity of the generic name was an enigma and I feared erroneously it would be a senior synonym of *Alpaida* O. Pickard-Cambridge 1889 (Levi 2002:562).

While reviewing illustrations of the lost specimens in Paris in 1958 when examining theridiids, I found notes and illustrations of *S. cerinus* and *S. rhomboidalis*. Both species had a similar epigynum: *cerinus* is a synonym of *rhomboidalis*, which I examined at that time. The diagonal abdomen, the long legs with the first patella and tibia twice the length of the carapace, and the unusual epigynum with a pointed scape having a pair of basal "ears" and lateral lobes, leave no

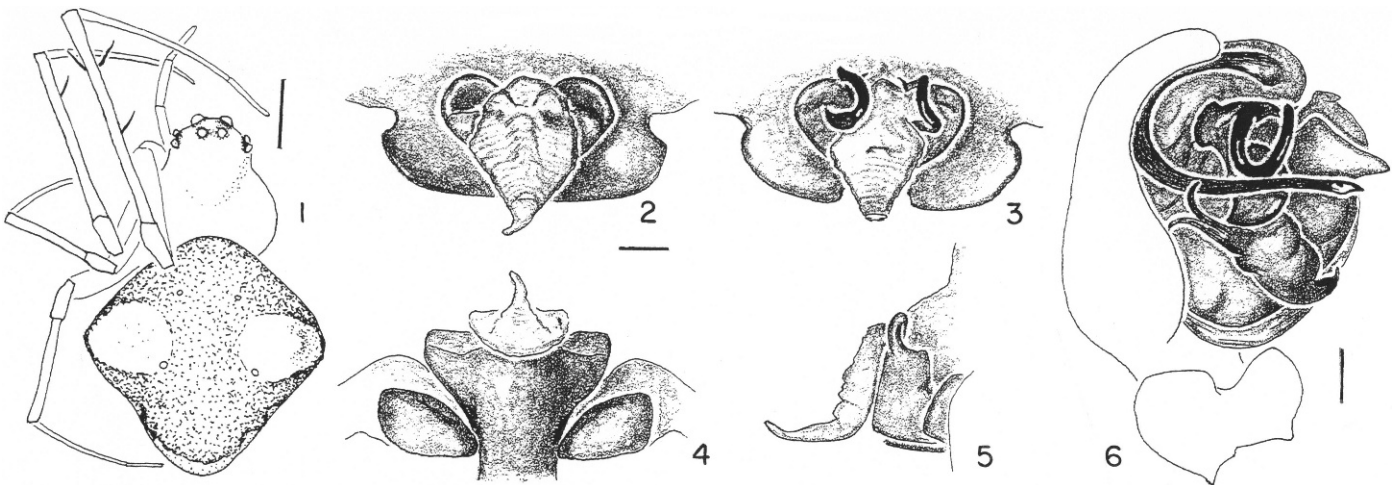
doubt that it is an older name for the widespread but rare *Madrepeira amazonica* Levi 1995.

#### *Spintharidius* Simon

*Spintharidius* Simon 1893. Type species. *S. rhomboidalis* Simon 1893. *Madrepeira* Levi 1995. Type species *M. amazonica*. NEW SYNONYMY

**Diagnosis.**—The female differs from other araneid genera by having a diamond-shaped abdomen with lateral humps (Fig. 1), thin legs with only a few long setae, and the epigynum with lateral and median plates fused on a base (Fig. 3) and on each side of the attachment of the annulate scape, a scale formed from the posterior median plate (Fig. 2).

The male palpus has a median apophysis with a pair of flagellate spines, and differs from others with a similar median apophysis by



Figures 1–6.—*Spintharidius rhomboidalis* Simon. 1. Female, dorsal view. 2–5. Epigynum: 2. Ventral view; 3. Ventral view, with broken emboli; 4. Posterior view; 5. Lateral view. 6. Left male palpus, mesal view. Scale lines: Fig. 1, 1.0 mm; Figs. 2–5, 0.1 mm. (From Levi 1995, with permission).

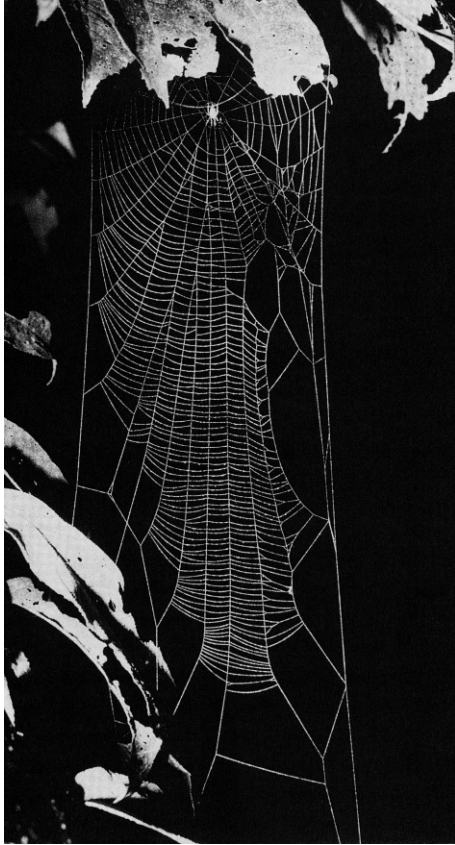


Figure 7.—Ladder orb-web of *Spintharidius rhomboidalis* resembles that of *Scoloderus* (Levi 1995, plate 5; reproduced with permission of the author).

having a U-shaped embolus and a long curved prong as terminal apophysis (Fig. 6).

The spiders make a ladder web resembling that of *Scoloderus* (Fig. 7).

*Spintharidius rhomboidalis* Simon (Figs. 1–6)

*Spintharidius rhomboidalis* Simon 1893. Female holotype from Paraguay in the Muséum Nationale d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, examined.

*S. cerinus* Simon 1893. Female holotype from southern Brazil, examined. NEW SYNONYMY.

*Madrepeira amazonica* Levi 1995. Female holotype from Albergue "Cuzco Amazonica," [12°33'S, 69°03W, elev. 200 m]. Departamento de Madre de Dios, Peru in the Museo Univarsitaria San Marco, Lima. NEW SYNONYMY.

Another name listed in the genus, *S. viridis* Franganillo 1926 from Cuba, remains unidentified.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

I thank Christine Rollard for searching for the *Spintharidius* specimens, Laura Leibensperger for rewording the manuscript, N. Scharff and one anonymous reader for improvements.

LITERATURE CITED

- Levi, H.W. 1995. Orb-weaving spiders *Actinosoma*, *Spilasma*, *Micrepeira*, *Pronous* and four new genera (Araneae: Araneidae). *Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology* 154:153–213.
- Levi, H.W. 2002. Keys to the genera of araneid orbweavers (Araneae, Araneidae) of the Americas. *Journal of Arachnology* 30:527–562.
- Simon, E. 1893. *Études Arachnologiques* 25e Memoire. XL Descriptions d'espèces et de genres nouveaux de l'ordre des Araneae. *Annales de la Société Entomologique de France* 62:326–327.

*Manuscript recieved 22 October 2007, revised 17 December 2007.*