

**TETRAGNATHA REIMOSERI (ROSCA, 1938) RECORDED FROM ITALY FOR THE FIRST TIME (ARANEAE, TETRAGNATHIDAE)**

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**ABSTRACT**

***Tetragnatha reimoseri* (Rosca, 1938) recorded from Italy for the first time (Araneae, Tetragnathidae).**

*Tetragnatha reimoseri* (Rosca, 1938) is recorded from Italy for the first time. It is also the first record from the Mediterranean Region. The presently known distribution is summarized. A critical overview of the available literature on this and related species is presented. It is suggested that Central-European records of *Tetragnatha isidis* refer to *T. reimoseri*.

Key words: distribution, first record, Italy, *Tetragnatha reimoseri*

**INTRODUCTION**

In the springtime of 2011 the authors made a trip to Gargano (Apulia) in Italy in order to study spiders. The results of the short inventory will be published in due course when all specimens have been identified. However, we want to record here the discovery of a population of *Tetragnatha reimoseri* (Rosca, 1938) in Italy for the first time.

**NEW ITALIAN RECORD**

*Tetragnatha reimoseri* (Rosca, 1938)

We found several male and female specimens of a *Tetragnatha* species along a footpath in a wetland area called “Palude de Frattarolo” on April 25, 2011. This marshy area is situated south of Manfredonia. A long canal runs northeast-southwest with a dyke along it, which slopes to the much lower marshy area on the north side. We did not enter the extensive marshland below the dyke. The not much used path on top of the dyke probably serves maintenance purposes. Further inland the path ends at a farmhouse. The verges of the path have a rich vegetation of mainly Milk thistle *Silibum marianum*, thistles *Cirsium* spec., Teasel *Dipsacus* spec., and striking plants such as Honeywort *Cerinthe major* and Tamarisk *Tamarix africana*, and of course a belt of Common reed *Phragmites* along the canal and ditch on the marshy side.

The first specimen was spotted resting on a plant. Sweeping of the vegetation produced more specimens of both sexes. A second visit to the site one week later (May 7) yielded more specimens, which leads to the conclusion that this species is not rare at this locality. Hardly any specimens of other *Tetragnatha* species were found there during this inventory, making this the dominant species of the genus there at this time of the year.

**DISTRIBUTION**

We follow here the references listed in Platnick (2011).

*Tetragnatha reimoseri* and its junior synonym *Tetragnatha kaestneri* have been mentioned for a number of European countries over the last 50 years. It was described and recorded from Romania (Rosca 1939, sub *Eucta reimoseri*; Vasiliu 1968, sub *Eucta kaestneri*; Fuhn & Oltean 1970, sub *Eucta reimoseri*) and in the course of time recorded from several other countries, such as Austria (Peters et al. 1962; Nemenz 1967; Pühringer 1975), Belgium (Janssen 1994), Germany (Crome 1954; Wiehle 1963, both sub *Eucta kaestneri*; Blick et al. 1993; several others), the Netherlands (Tutelaers 2001), and Poland (Dziabaszewski 1974). The record for the Netherlands is doubtful as to the country, because it was collected on the border of Belgium and the Netherlands. The present record from Italy is the first one in the Mediterranean Region.

In Germany all records come from the eastern states bordering Poland. The records from the Netherlands and Belgium come from one and the same population near the border between Stramproy (Netherlands) and Bree (Belgium) in the surroundings of fish ponds in Belgium.

**TAXONOMIC REMARKS**

The identification of our specimens in a way looked simple because of the prolonged abdomen. Within the genus *Tetragnatha* there is a tendency for prolongation of the abdomen beyond the spinnerets. Within Europe this is the

case only in *Tetragnatha isidis* Simon, 1880 and *T. reimoseri* (Rosca, 1939)<sup>2</sup>. In the *T. isidis* the “tail” is as long as the anterior part of the abdomen. In *T. reimoseri* the “tail” is much shorter, at the most about half as long as the anterior part. The tip of the prolonged part is slightly hook-shaped, which reminds of the abdominal structure in some species of the genus *Rhomphaea* (Theridiidae). The same phenomenon is shown in the Nearctic Region by *Tetragnatha caudata* Emerton, 1884 and *T. branda* Levi, 1981 (see Levi 1981), in the Far East by *T. caudicula* (Karsch, 1879), and by *T. javana* (Thorell, 1890) which occurs from Africa to Japan, Philippines, and Indonesia.

Several descriptions and figures are available for *T. reimoseri*. Crome (1954) and Wiehle (1963) (both sub *Eucta kaestneri*) supply very useful and detailed illustrations for both sexes, while Vasiliu (1968) depicts a lateral view of the abdomen, the chelicerae from both sides, and the vulva. The original description of *Eucta* (= *Tetragnatha*) *reimoseri* Rosca, 1939 is very detailed, but the epigyne is depicted only very superficially and not described but mentioned to be similar to that of *T. montana* Simon, 1874; the chelicerae of the female are depicted from both sides. The type of *isidis* was examined in the Museum National d’Histoire Naturelle, Paris, by C. Oltean (Fuhn & Oltean 1970, p. 172, footnote) and found to be different from *reimoseri*.

*Tetragnatha isidis* was originally described after a female from Egypt as *Eugnatha isidis* (Simon, 1880) and comprises descriptions of body, legs and chelicerae only but not of the genitalia. Subsequent records of this species came from southern France (Simon 1881, sub *Eucta gallica*) and from the valley of the Seine west of Rouen (Simon 1929, sub *Eucta isidis*) and comprise general somatic features only. Although Simon in his description of *Eucta gallica* explicitly states there are differences with *E. isidis* (Simon, 1881, p. 7, note), he later synonymized *E. gallica* with *E. isidis* (Simon, 1929: 751). Lendl (1886) described *Eucta lutescens* from Hungary, which was followed by Chyzer & Kulczyn’ski (1891). The description by Lendl is in Hungarian, but body, chelicerae, and male palp are depicted, although the figures of the palp are very small and without much detail. De Lessert (1915, sub *Eucta isidis*) recorded the species from Uganda. From Russia the species was recorded by Azheganova (1968, sub *Eucta lutescens*) and from Georgia by Mcheidze (1997, sub *Eucta isidis*). Both authors depict the male palp and female vulva. Nikolic & Polenec listed the species for Croatia and Serbia (Nikolic & Polenec, 1981, sub *Eucta isidis*). The record from Spain (Valencia) (Morano & Ferrández 1985, sub *Eucta isidis*) concerned only one female of which the chelicerae, abdomen, epigyne, and vulva were depicted. The female depicted (Morano & Ferrández 1985, fig. 2) has a tail which is as long as the anterior part of the abdomen. The figure of the epigyne (fig. 6) differs from our specimens, the vulva (fig. 7) looks quite different, while the dorsal view of the chelicerae shows an isolated denticle on the frontal surface, slightly apart from the dorsal (frontal) row of denticles (which they compare with the situation as shown by De Lessert (1915) for his specimen from Uganda). The specimen is quite similar to the Oriental-African species *Tetragnatha javana* (Thorell, 1890) as depicted by Okuma (1984). Okuma states in his article that *T. javana* might possibly be a junior synonym of *T. isidis*.

## CONCLUSION AND PROPOSAL

In our specimens the tail is distinct and in agreement with the illustrations for *Eucta* (= *Tetragnatha*) *kaestneri* in Crome (1954) and Wiehle (1963). However, it equally well fits the descriptions and few illustrations of *Tetragnatha isidis* and its different synonyms (with the exception of those by De Lessert (1915) from Uganda and that of Morano & Ferrández (1985) from Spain, see above). This equally holds for the chelicerae, the male palp, and the vulva. We therefore draw the provisional conclusion that the European records of *Tetragnatha isidis* (Simon, 1880) in the sense of most authors and *Tetragnatha reimoseri* (Rosca, 1939) concern one and the same species, for which the specific name *T. reimoseri* should be used. Or, in different words, several European authors have thought that they had *Tetragnatha* (*Eucta*) *isidis* in front of them while actually dealing with *T. reimoseri*. Consequently we here report *Tetragnatha reimoseri* (Rosca, 1938) for the Italian fauna for the first time.

A possible reason for the confusion in the literature might be the synonymization of *T. gallica* with *T. isidis* by Simon. Our hypothesis is that *T. gallica* represents the species that currently is known as *T. reimoseri*, and was unjustly synonymized by Simon. This would render *T. isidis* a species from Asia and Africa, with one record from Spain, and *T. reimoseri* a European species.

C. Oltean (Fuhn & Oltean 1970, p. 172, footnote) concluded that *Eucta kaestneri* was a junior synonym of *Eucta reimoseri* and *Eucta reimoseri* was not synonymous with *E. isidis*, after examination of the type of *E. isidis* in Paris. If the above hypothesis is correct, he would have found that his *reimoseri* was synonymous with Simon’s *gallica* if he would have compared with the *gallica* type specimen. However, by that time, *gallica* was already synonymized by Simon himself (Simon, 1929: 751), even though he stated that *gallica* differed in a number of characters from *isidis* (Simon, 1881, p. 7, note). Why he decided to synonymize the two later, in 1929, is not clear to us. We have not yet examined original material of *gallica* in the collection of the Museum National d’Histoire Naturelle at Paris, but intend to do so.

<sup>2</sup> The endemic Italian species *Eucta* (= *Tetragnatha*) *zangherii* (Caporiacco, 1926) could be ruled out because the description (Di Caporiacco 1926) does not mention the abdominal prolongation.

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