

ISSN 1759-0116 (Online)

# ZooNova

## Occasional Papers in Zoology

Number 23, Pages 1 – 5

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THE 1980 WORK 'UNE LACUNE DE LA FAMILLE MOINS DANS LA DES  
MIMETIDAE' WITH TAXONOMIC NOTES ON TWO ENIGMATIC  
SPECIES (ARANEAE: MIMETIDAE)**

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Published on-line at <https://zoonova.afriherp.org>

Afriherp Communications, Greenford, United Kingdom

Date of publication: 10 February 2023

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**On the availability of Madagascan pirate spider names in the 1980 work ‘*Une lacune de La famille moins dans la des Mimetidae*’ with taxonomic notes on two enigmatic species (Araneae: Mimetidae)**

LSID: urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:C5D34F36-0CB7-451E-B2AD-EC6980AE0039

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### ABSTRACT

Five spider names published in Emerit (1980), considered *nomina nuda* by Brignoli (1983), are demonstrated to be available under Article 13.1.1 of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature. Therefore, the authorship dates of these names, two previously considered permanent *nomina nuda* and three of which were considered made valid in a subsequent 1996 work are corrected and discussion provided. *Ero andringitrae* Emerit, 1980 and *Mimetus legendrei* Emerit, 1980 are considered as *nomina dubia*.

**Key words:** nomenclature, historical, literature, Madagascar, International Code of Zoological Nomenclature

### INTRODUCTION

Emerit (1980) presented preliminary results of a study of the pirate spiders (Mimetidae) of Madagascar, identifying, illustrating, and naming five probable endemics, three belonging to *Ero* C. L. Koch, 1836 and two to *Mimetus* Hentz, 1832. The specimens examined were said to be deposited in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris (MNHN) and in two private collections. Brignoli (1983: 282) considered all the names as *nomina nuda* without explanation and this has been accepted by the World Spider Catalog (2023). Later, Emerit (1996) presented conventional taxonomic descriptions of four species (three of which were taxa he mentioned in 1980), stating the types would be deposited in MNHN, accepting Brignoli's opinion that his earlier work only produced *nomina nuda*. However, a recent re-examination of the literature concerning Madagascan pirate spiders by the present author demonstrated that the text of Emerit (1980) does meet requirements to make the proposed names valid according to the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 2012). The present work was a serendipitous result of consultation of the literature by the author whilst she was comparing possibly novel mimetid material from elsewhere in Africa against nearby congeners.

In this work, the five names proposed in Emerit (1980) are confirmed as available and are discussed. *Ero andringitrae* Emerit, 1980 and *Mimetus legendrei* Emerit, 1980 are considered as *nomina dubia*.

### RESULTS

*Ero lokobeana* Emerit, 1980

*Ero lokobeana* Emerit, 1980: 57–58, fig. 3A.

*Ero lokobeana*: Emerit (1996): 101, figs. 7C, 8, 11A.

*Ero lokobeana*: Benavides & Hormiga (2020): 157, figs. 11C, 12A, 15A.

**Type material:** Holotype ♀ *Ero lokobeana* (MNHN, formerly EM 4240), Lokobé (Nossi-Bé), [collector and date unknown], not examined.

**Remarks:** Emerit (1980: 57) states the following for *E. lokobeana*, comparing it to *E. madagascariensis* (for remarks on that taxon, see below): “*Ero lokobeana* est représenté par une femelle en provenance de la forêt de Lokobé dans l'île de Nossi-Be. A la différence de l'espèce précédente, elle ne possède qu'un tubercule abdominal médio-dorsal, en disposition impaire (Fig. 3, A).” On the subsequent page, in a paragraph justifying the placement of three of the new Madagascan species to the genus *Ero* as opposed to the others within *Mimetus* – based on measurement characters – Emerit (1980: 58) provides further diagnosis: “... et de 1,38 chez *E. lokobeana* (femelles)”. The description of the number of abdominal tubercles in comparison to *E. madagascariensis* and provision of a measurement make the name available per Article 13.1.1 of the Code (ICZN 2012). Emerit (1996) later gives a conventional (re)description of this species, which can be referred to for a better taxonomic identification. Nonetheless, the name was first made available in the former work, and the correct authorship is therefore *Ero lokobeana* Emerit, 1980.

*Ero madagascariensis* Emerit, 1980

*Ero madagascariensis* Emerit, 1980: 57–58, figs. 1, 3B, first half of unnumbered pl.

*Ero madagascariensis*: Emerit (1996): 95, figs. 1–6, 7A–B, 11B.

*Ero andringitrae*: Emerit (1996): 103.

**Type material:** Holotype ♂ *Ero madagascariensis* (MNHN, formerly EM 5025-2), Tsaratanana, IX/1949, coll. R. Paulian, not examined; allotype ♀ *Ero madagascariensis* (MNHN, formerly EM 4242), Mandraka (route de Tananarive à Tamatave), I/1967, coll. R. Legendre, not examined.

**Remarks:** Emerit (1980: 57) states the following for *E. madagascariensis*: “*Ero madagascariensis* est caractérisé par la présence de deux tubercules mucronés à la face postéro-supérieure de son abdomen, en plus des caractères qui définissent le genre (Fig. 1, Fig. 3, B). Il serait moins rare que les autres Mimetidae malgaches, que l'on ne connaît qu'à un seul exemplaire. Nous avons en effet trouvé 15 de ces Araignées (dont 8 mâles), provenant de battages de la strate arbustive en haute forêt de l'Est (Périnet, Mandraka), ou dans les forêts du Centre rattachées au domaine de l'Est (environs de Tananarive, Andringitra, Tsaratanana, lac Itasy) (Fig. 2). *Ero madagascariensis* est proche de *E. lawrencei*, mais en diffère notamment par la forme de son paracymbium, qui est ici dépourvu de soies. La femelle est plus grosse que le mâle (3, 4 mm en moyenne de longueur totale au lieu de 2,7 mm) (Planche). Les types d'*Ero lawrencei* sont beaucoup plus grands (femelle: 4,3 mm, mâle: 3,6 mm). Le type femelle d'*Ero capensis*, qui est malheureusement introuvable au Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle de Paris, est de même taille que l'espèce malgache (3,5 mm), mais ne semble pas posséder, d'après la description de SIMON (1895), les deux tubercules abdominaux.”

Furthermore, an additional sentence is given on the proceeding page (Emerit 1980: 58): “Chez *Ero madagascariensis*, ce rapport est de 1,61 pour la femelle, 1,78 pour le mâle (moyenne de 6 mesures pour chaque sexe) ...” The mention of the number of tubercles, body sizes, and differences in the male paracymbium are all differentiating characters which make this name available per Article 13.1.1 of the Code (ICZN 2012). Emerit (1996) later gives a conventional (re)description of this species, which can be referred to for a better taxonomic identification. Nonetheless, the name was first made available in the former work, and the correct authorship is therefore *Ero madagascariensis* Emerit, 1980. Inconsistency in the reference number of the holotype male of *E. madagascariensis* is apparent: it is cited as 5025-2 in Emerit (1980) and 5025.1 in Emerit (1996). It is not clear which of these presents a *lapsus* and which is the correct number. Benavides & Hormiga (2020) include *E.*

*madagascariensis* in their phylogeny of Mimetidae (alongside *E. lokobeana*, which is additionally illustrated in their work). They spell the specific epithet correctly in their appendix (Benavides & Hormiga 2020: 189), but there is a *lapsus* in the labels on their phylogenetic trees where the incorrect subsequent spelling “*Ero madagascarensis*” is used (Benavides & Hormiga 2002: figs. 2, 30–31).

*Ero andringitrae* Emerit, 1980 **nomen dubium**

*Ero andringitrae* Emerit, 1980: 57–58, fig. 3C.

**Type material:** Holotype imm. *Ero andringitrae* (MNHN, formerly CEM 3830-6), Andringitra, [collector and date not given], not examined.

**Remarks:** Emerit (1980) described *Ero andringitrae* Emerit, 1980 based on a juvenile specimen. The textual description of tubercles and provision of a measurement make the name available: “Il existe enfin dans la forêt de l'Andringitra une espèce à quatre tubercules abdominaux, dont nous ne possédons malheureusement qu'un exemplaire immature (*Ero andringitrae*) (Fig. 3, C).” (Emerit 1980: 56) and “... il est de 1,42 chez *Ero andringitrae* ...” (Emerit 1980: 57). Emerit (1996) later states this name is synonymous with *E. madagascariensis*, but a formal synonymy is not made in the conventional way because he considered the former name to be a *nomen nudum*. *Ero andringitrae* is confirmed herein as an available name. Nonetheless, given it was described based on a juvenile specimen, and considering Emerit was inconsistent in decisions about other synonymies (see below), it is hereby proposed as a **nomen dubium**.

*Mimetus legendrei* Emerit, 1980 **nomen dubium**

*Mimetus legendrei* Emerit, 1980: 58–59, fig. 3E.

*Mimetus* sp.: Emerit (1996): 106–107.

**Type material:** Holotype imm. ♀ *Mimetus legendrei* (MNHN, formerly CEM 4239), Nossi-Bé, route de Lokobé, 1958, coll. R. Legendre, not examined.

**Remarks:** Emerit (1980: 58–59) gives the following description of *M. legendrei*: “Des deux *Mimetus* trouvés dans les collections malgaches, une femelle de la forêt de Lokobé, *Mimetus legendrei* (Fig. 3, E) porte deux cornes au dessus des yeux médians antérieurs. Ce caractère, qui n'a pas de valeur générique, existe d'ailleurs ici et là, chez diverses espèces de la famille (SIMON, 1895, p. 941). Ces cornes manquent chez un mâle étiqueté «Tananarive» que nous avons nommé *Mimetus madacassus*, bien que la forme générale du corps et son décor invitent à penser qu'il s'agit de la même espèce, ce qui serait possible.” A sentence on the same page also provides a measurement to distinguish this species from *M. madacassus* (the first measurement for *M. legendrei* and the second for *M. madacassus*): “Les rapports  $P_1/P_4$  sont respectivement de 1,93 et 2,33 pour ces deux spécimens.”

The description of the abdominal tubercles and provision of a measurement make this name available per Article 13.1.1 of the Code (ICZN 2012). Emerit (1996) subsequently refers to this taxon as ‘*Mimetus* sp.’ but explains that he believed the subadult specimens he assigned to this species were still sufficiently distinct to other known mimetids on Madagascar. However, this contrasts with his prior work where he postulated that this species and *M. madacassus* may be synonymous (Emerit 1980: 62, see also below). *Mimetus legendrei* is defined based on a juvenile specimen which may show unstable ontogenetic characters and is thus proposed as a **nomen dubium**.

An inconsistency exists between Emerit (1996) where the reference number of the holotype of *M. legendrei* was given as CEM 4238 and Emerit (1980) where it was given as CEM 4239. It is unclear which of these represents the *lapsus*. Two additional specimens mentioned in Emerit (1996), a subadult female from Maromandia (MNHN, formerly CEM 5735) and a

subadult male from Marotandroboka (MNHN, formerly CEM 5741), are not type specimens and were not figured in the original description.

*Mimetus madacassus* Emerit, 1980

*Mimetus madacassus* Emerit, 1980: 62, fig. 3D, second half of unnumbered pl.

*Mimetus madacassus*: Emerit (1996): 103, figs. 10, 11D, 12A.

**Type material:** Holotype ♂ *Mimetus madecassus* (MNHN, formerly EM 4245), Tananarive, coll. I.R.S.M [= Institut Recherche Scientifique de Madagascar], [date unknown], not examined.

**Remarks:** Emerit (1980: 62) gives the following description for *M. madacassus*, comparing it to *M. legendrei* and remarking dismissively (i.e. not formally proposing) that they may be synonymous: “Ces cornes manquent chez un mâle étiqueté «Tananarive» que nous avons nommé *Mimetus madecassus*, bien que la forme générale du corps et son décor invitent à penser qu'il s'agit de la même espèce, ce qui serait possible.” On the same page, measurements are given to differentiate the two species (the first measurement for *M. legendrei* and the second for *M. madacassus*): “Les rapports  $P_1/P_4$  sont respectivement de 1,93 et 2,33 pour ces deux spécimens.” (Emerit 1980: 62). The statement of the absence of abdominal tubercles and provision of a measurement make this name available per Article 13.1.1 of the Code (ICZN 2012). Emerit (1996) later gives a conventional (re)description of this species, which can be referred to for a better taxonomic identification. Nonetheless, the name was first made available in the former work, and the correct authorship is therefore *Mimetus madacassus* Emerit, 1980.

## DISCUSSION

The present work corrects the dates of publication of five names for Madagascan pirate spiders. The descriptive text found in Emerit (1980) made these names available well before he published conventional taxonomic (re)descriptions of some of them sixteen years later (Emerit 1996). Article 13.1.1 of the Code (ICZN 2012) states that for new names established after 1930 they must (if not described instead by reference to an earlier bibliographical work): “... be accompanied by a description or definition that states in words characters that are purported to differentiate the taxon”. When publishing preliminary results, workers should be careful not to inadvertently make names available prior to (later) publication of conventional taxonomic descriptions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Neal Evenhuis (Bishop Museum, Honolulu) for helpful discussion on Article 13.1.1 of the Code and Theo Blick (World Spider Catalog) for invaluable comments on an early draft of the manuscript. Mark Harvey (Western Australian Museum) and an anonymous reviewer are thanked for comments that improved the final manuscript.

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**World Spider Catalog 2023.** *World Spider Catalog, version 23.5.* Natural History Museum Bern, online at: <http://wsc.nmbe.ch>

**Accepted for publication: 9 February 2023**