

Extending the known range of an odd looking spider, *Cyrtarachne ixoides* (Simon, 1870), in Portugal (Araneae: Araneidae)

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Abstract: The second record from continental Portugal of the spider *Cyrtarachne ixoides* (Simon, 1870) is presented, considerably extending its known distribution in the country.

Key words: Arachnida, Araneidae, *Cyrtarachne ixoides*, second record, Portugal.

Ampliación de la distribución conocida de *Cyrtarachne ixoides* (Simon, 1870), una araña de apariencia peculiar, en Portugal (Araneae: Araneidae)

Resumen: Se presenta el segundo registro para Portugal continental de la araña *Cyrtarachne ixoides* (Simon, 1870), ampliando considerablemente su área de distribución conocida en el país.

Palabras clave: Arachnida, Araneidae, *Cyrtarachne ixoides*, segundo registro, Portugal.

The continental Portuguese fauna of the family Araneidae Simon, 1895 comprises approximately 55 species of 23 genera (Bacelar, 1927, 1928; Morano & Ferrández, 1985; Cardoso, 2000).

As with other families, the knowledge about Portuguese Araneidae is poor, even more so if we consider that some of the more conspicuous orb-weaving spiders belong to this family. This translates in an incomplete inventory of the Araneidae species present in continental Portugal, as can be confirmed by the addition of four new species in recent years (Mendes, 2003; Telfer *et al.*, 2003; Sousa, 2006; Cardoso *et al.*, 2009), and in an even poorer knowledge of their distribution in the country.

The recently added *Cyrtarachne ixoides* (Simon, 1870) by Telfer *et al.* (2003) is a peculiarly looking spider with adult females resembling bird droppings (Figure 1), a characteristic that can be found mainly in tropical spiders. *Cyrtarachne ixoides* has an Indo-Mediterranean distribution (Emerit, 2000), ranging from Portugal, its westernmost limit, to Madagascar, and is the sole representative of the genus *Cyrtarachne* Thorell, 1868 that reaches European latitudes although this genus comprises more than 50 species, with most of its diversity in tropical areas (Platnick, 2008). This species is scarcely known in the Iberian Peninsula, with a single recorded locality in Spain, Barcelona (Levy, 1997 in Telfer *et al.*, 2003) and one in Portugal, Vila Pouca (Mafra) (Telfer *et al.*, 2003).

In this work we present two new records of *C. ixoides* for Portugal, considerably increasing the species known range in the country (Map 1).

MATERIAL EXAMINED: Maia: Silva Escura (29TNF3467), 21-07-2004, 1 ♀ (Inês Cunha & Sónia Ferreira *leg.*, Pedro Sousa *coll.*); **Rio Maior:** Paúl da Marmeleira (29SND1346), 10-07-2001, 1 ♀ (Grosso-Silva *leg. et coll.*).

Both specimens examined closely resemble Emerit's (2000) description and illustration, namely in opisthosomal color and sigilla pattern, although the dorsal tubercles are not as prominent. A slight discrepancy was observed in the collected specimens' epigyne when compared with Emerit's drawings: the presence of two parallel semi-transparent almost circular areas just in front of the epigyne, not illustrated or referred by Emerit. Furthermore, this author mentions two visible kidney-shaped spermatheca channels, which were also observed in the studied specimens.

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Fig. 1. Specimen from Silva Escura in dorsal view. **Map 1.** Known distribution of *Cyrtarachne ixoides* (Simon, 1870) in continental Portugal. The bibliographic locality is presented as a grey dot, black dots represent the two new localities.

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