

Scientific note

*Apocheiridium ferum* (Simon, 1879) new to the fauna of Slovakia

(Pseudoscorpiones, Cheiridiidae)

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The genus *Apocheiridium* Chamberlin, 1924 with 28 species recognised represents the largest genus within the family Cheiridiidae Hansen, 1894. It is distributed in all continents, but no representative was found in continental Australia (Harvey 2013). Most of the *Apocheiridium* pseudoscorpions are short-range endemic species, except for *A. ferum* (Simon, 1879), *A. pelagicum* Redikorzev, 1938 and *A. rossicum* Redikorzev, 1935 (Harvey 2013). *Apocheiridium ferum* is widespread in Europe and reaches Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran and Uzbekistan (Harvey 2013, Nassirkhani 2015). Most recently, the species was discovered in Hungary (Christophoryová & Červená 2020).

During a field trip to the castle park in Malacky (48°26'22.15" N, 17°01'49.47" E), carried out on March 13, 2021, five males and three females of *A. ferum* (Fig. 1) were collected under the bark of an old *Platanus* Linné, 1753 tree. The specimens were fixed in 75 % ethanol and deposited in the zoological collections of the Department of Zoology at Comenius University in Bratislava. The species was identified using the key in Christophoryová et al. (2011). The main diagnostic characters are: palpal femur widened basally, 11 visible tergites from above and carapace without humeral angles (Fig. 1).

This dendrophilous pseudoscorpion is commonly found under the tree bark (e.g. Novák et al. 2019, Christophoryová & Červená 2020), but there are also records from a cave (Dumitresco & Orghidan 1964), under stones (Dashdamirov 1999), or in a soil sample (Mahnert 1997). In Slovakia, the finding represents the first record of the genus and the species for the pseudoscorpion fauna and fills the gap in the distribution in Central Europe. With this new record, 58 species and 24 genera are currently known in the Slovakian pseudoscorpion fauna.

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Fig. 1. Male of *Apocheiridium ferum* with main diagnostic characters; tergites I.-XI., arrow points to the shape of palpal femur. Scale bar: 1 mm.

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