

## Taxonomy and Distribution of *Equitius* in Eastern Australia (Opiliones: Laniatores: Triaenonychidae).

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**ABSTRACT.** The genus *Equitius* is revised. *Jenolanicus* Roewer, 1915, *Monacanthobunus* Roewer, 1915, *Monoxyomma* Pocock, 1903 and *Rydrusa* Roewer, 1931 = new synonyms of *Equitius* Simon, 1880. Three new combinations are established: *E. altus* (Forster, 1955) (*Jenolanicus*), *E. spinatus* (Pocock, 1903) (*Monoxyomma*) and *E. tambourineus* (Roewer, 1921) (*Jenolanicus*). Four new synonymies are proposed: *Jenolanicus armatus* Roewer, 1915 and *Monacanthobunus continentalis* Roewer, 1915 = *E. doriae* Simon, 1880; *E. affinis* Roewer, 1923 and *Rydrusa armata* Roewer, 1931 = *E. tambourineus* (Roewer, 1921). Three new species are described: *E. formidabilis*, *E. montanus* and *E. richardsae*. A key to all seven species is given.

Discontinuous mountain blocks and major river valleys are seen as factors influencing the present distribution of species in south-eastern Australia. An isolated cave population of *E. altus* is noted.

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*Equitius* is the dominant harvestman genus inhabiting moist forest and woodland in the coastal ranges and plains of south-eastern Australia, from southern Queensland (latitude 27°S) to the Shoalhaven River, N.S.W. (latitude 35°S). Its species are perhaps the commonest large arachnids to be found under logs on the forest floor, but the importance of the genus has not previously been recognised because of failure by authors to recognise the taxonomic unity of these species.

### Materials and Methods

Type material of all nominal species has been examined and reassessed. The following abbreviations have been used to indicate the present location of material examined:

AM	The Australian Museum, Sydney
ANIC	Australian National Insect Collection, Canberra
BM	British Museum (Natural History), London
MCSN	Museo Civico di Storia Naturale, Genoa
PM	Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris
MV	Museum of Victoria, Melbourne
NHRMS	Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet, Stockholm
NMS	NaturMuseum Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main
UQ	University of Queensland, Entomology Dept., Brisbane

Terminology closely follows that of Forster (1954). Tergal areas 1-5 are abbreviated to TA1, TA2, etc. Methods of measuring specimens follow Hunt (1979).

Male dimorphism has been noted in all species of *Equitius* except *E. formidabilis* where only small samples are available. The phenomenon is described in detail elsewhere (Hunt, 1979). Form A males, which exhibit normal development of secondary sexual characteristics, are used for the description of males. Form B males show incomplete development of secondary sexual characteristics in body size, robustness of pedipalps and in the size and nature of certain spines on the pedipalps. Form B are not described here as inclusion would make each species description unduly long and complex. The specific status of these males can be determined from male genitalic characters which are the same as in Form A males, or by their presence in a large series of specimens in which the identity of Form A males and females has been determined.

**Family Triaenonychidae** Soerensen, 1886  
**Subfamily Triaenonychinae** Pocock, 1903  
**Tribe Triaenonychini** Pocock, 1903

**Genus *Equitius*** Simon, 1880

*Equitius* Simon, 1880: 100. — Roewer, 1915: 110, 1923: 606.  
Type-species: *Equitius doriae* Simon.