

OECOBIUS AMBOSELI SHEAR & BENOIT, 1974 (ARANEAE, OECOBIIDAE) FOUND IN THE NETHERLANDS AND ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Oecobius amboseli Shear & Benoit 1974 is reported for the first time for The Netherlands and for Ethiopia. A short description and a picture of the epigyne are provided.

INTRODUCTION

11 October 2003 I found a female *Oecobius* running on the wall of my living room in Leiden, The Netherlands. The spider was very difficult to identify. I focused on Mediterranean species of *Oecobius* (because of my Turkish and Moroccan neighbours), but none of the many described species did match the very distinct epigyne of the collected specimen, and eventually I gave up.

In December 2012 and January 2013, I visited the house of my sister-in-law in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. On the walls in her living room a considerable colony of the same *Oecobius* species was present.

Søren Toft and Jörg Wunderlich recently published on an African *Oecobius* species that established itself in Denmark, *Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974. They found an abundant population in a basement room of the Aarhus University. The room was in use for growing wheat seedlings for aphid cultures, and upon discovery a population of several hundred individuals had already established itself. Toft and Wunderlich suspect it is an initial phase of worldwide spreading by human transport (Toft & Wunderlich, 2012).

I sent a picture of the epigyne of the Dutch specimen to Søren Toft, and he confirmed it is indeed the same African species, *Oecobius amboseli* Shear & Benoit, 1974. No other spiders of the same species were found in my house till 2009, so a population was not established. However, the find does indicate that the species is indeed able to be transported over long distances and survive for some time in European indoor conditions. How the spider reached my house is unclear, no visitors from Ethiopia were received before the collection date.

Oecobius amboseli was described by Shear and Benoit from the Masai Amboseli Reserve, Kenya, from a female only. No further details were provided (Shear & Benoit, 1974). El-Hennawy described the male from Cairo, Egypt, where he collected males and females walking on the walls or from nests on walls inside buildings. A specimen from Uganda was collected by D. Penney from a wall on the outside of a building (El-Hennawy, 2004).

This is the first record for *Oecobius amboseli* for both The Netherlands and Ethiopia. The species is now reported from Denmark (introduced), Egypt (possibly introduced), Uganda, and Kenya, often synanthropic (Toft & Wunderlich, 2012).

OECOBIUS AMBOSELI SHEAR & BENOIT, 1974

Short description

Material: 1 ♀ from Leiden, The Netherlands (N 52°09.912' E 4°29.829', 11.x.2003), 2 ♀ from Bahir Dar, Ethiopia (N 11°34.947' E 37°22.433', 1.i.2013), indoors. All specimens in collection of the author.

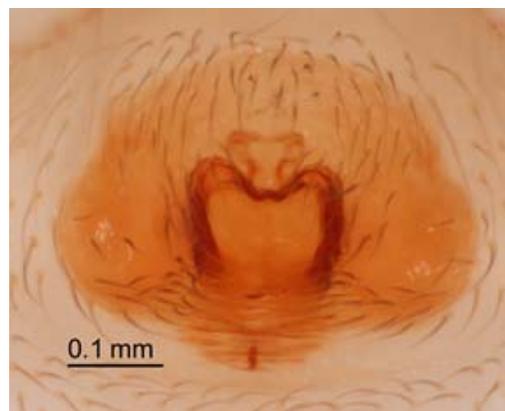


Fig. 1. Epigyne of *Oecobius amboseli*, found in the Netherlands. Photo: Jeremy Miller.

Body length: 2.5 mm (Dutch specimen), 2.35 – 2.45 mm (Ethiopian specimens). Colour prosoma light yellow, medially and marginally suffused with grey; sternum light yellow, legs yellow, opisthosoma variable, yellowish brown with numerous small white spots dorsally and larger grey spots marginally.

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RECENTE WIJZIGINGEN IN NOMENCLATUUR

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ABSTRACT

The latest nomenclatorial changes of relevance for the Dutch spider checklist are presented, together with the former allocations: *Meioneta* Hull, 1920 is a junior synonym of *Agyreta* Hull, 1911. Therefore, all the *Meioneta* species are transferred to *Agyreta*.

Key words: *Agyreta*, *Meioneta*, nomenclature

For a long time the sword of Damocles Platnick balanced above the World Spider Catalog. Contradictory opinions about the synonymy of *Meioneta* Hull, 1920 with *Agyreta* Hull, 1911 made Norman Platnick to stick to the traditional stabilized recognition of the two genera. Then a thorough analysis of the genus *Agyreta* in North America showed the convincing arguments. In his most recent World Spider Catalog Version 14.0 (Platnick 2013) *Meioneta* Hull, 1920 was registered as a junior synonym of *Agyreta* Hull, 1911. The proposal for synonymisation was made by Saaristo & Tanasevitch in 1973 but not supported by Wunderlich in the same year. No convincing character analysis was supplied. The recent taxonomic revision by Dupérré (Dupérré 2013) does present the proper arguments for the nomenclatorial change. Consequently all European species of *Meioneta* have been transferred to *Agyreta* in the Dutch spider catalogue, the checklist of Dutch spiders, as well as in the Fauna Europaea database.

Present name	Former name
<i>Agyreta</i> Hull, 1911	<i>Meioneta</i> Hull, 1920
<i>Agyreta affinis</i> (Kulczynski, 1898)	<i>Meioneta affinis</i> Kulczynski, 1898
<i>Agyreta innotabilis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1863)	<i>Meioneta innotabilis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1863)
<i>Agyreta mollis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1871)	<i>Meioneta mollis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge, 1871)
<i>Agyreta rurestris</i> (C.L. Koch, 1836)	<i>Meioneta rurestris</i> (C.L. Koch, 1836)
<i>Agyreta saxatilis</i> (Blackwall, 1844)	<i>Meioneta saxatilis</i> (Blackwall, 1844)

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