Taxonomic Revision of the Tarantula Genus Aphonopelma Pocock, 1901 (Araneae, Mygalomorphae, Theraphosidae) Within the United States

Description: Tarantulas have long been the objects of fascination and fear in popular culture, yet very little is known about these enigmatic spiders. This monograph documents the diversity and distribution of the tarantula genus Aphonopelma in the United States.

Based on examination of nearly 3,000 specimens from museum and field collections, the authors provide detailed descriptions for the 29 tarantula species known to occur in the United States, including 14 newly recognized species: A. atomicum sp. n., A. catalina sp. n., A. chiricahua sp. n., A. icenoglei sp. n., A. johnnycashi sp. n., A. madera sp. n., A. mareki sp. n., A. moellendorfi sp. n., A. parvum sp. n., A. peloncillo sp. n., A. prenticei sp. n., A. saguaro sp. n., A. superstitionense sp. n., and A. xwalxwal sp. n.

This data-rich contribution represents the most comprehensive taxonomic treatment for any group of tarantulas to date and brings a modern understanding of species delimitation to this dynamic and charismatic group of spiders.

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