

PHALANGIUM CANCROIDES.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Pedes octo.

Oculi verticis duo contigui, duo laterales.

Frons antennis pediformibus.

Abdomen rotundatum.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1028.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

PHALANGIUM abdomine obovato depresso, chelis lævibus : digitis pilosis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1028.

CHELIFER abdomine lineis transversis.

Geoffr. Paris. 2. p. 618.

SCORPIO MINIMUS.

Roefel. 3. *Supl.* t. 64.

Animalculum hoc, phycis diu cognitum, diversis temporibus ad diversa genera retulerunt entomologi. Laboriosus celeberrimusque Swammerdamus quasi scorpionis speciem descripsit. Idem fecit Roefelius. Quamquam in editione duodecima Systematis Naturæ Linnaeus in genere Phalangii posuerit, in Fauna tamen Suecica ab eodem auctore conscripta, inter acaros numeratur. Ingeniosus Degeer genus illi distinctum nomine Cheliferi

Cheliferi instituit. Fabricius denique in Systemate Entomologico iterum ad genus *Scorpii* amandavit, cui fortasse conjunctius est quam ulli alii. Magnitudine multum variat hoc insectum: quæ enim in Anglia inveniuntur specimina, multo minora sunt quam in Sebæ, Swammerdami, et Roeselii operibus depicta. Figura microscopica in hac nostra tabula accuratissime delineatur. Altera quæ disjungitur, caput et thoracem amplitudine admodum aucta ostendunt, ut partes pectinatae appareant; quæ quamvis situ diversæ, formam tamen fere eandem habent ac in scorpiis. Figura 1. magnitudinem naturalem insecti, ut in Anglia conspicitur, monstrat. Accusat hoc insectum Linnæus, sed (ut mihi videtur,) injuria, cutim interdum penetrandi, papulamque magnitudine pisi, summo cum dolore excitandi. Circa parietes antiquos, ut plurimum invenitur, et interdum inter papyram, &c. conspicitur. Inter insecta quoque rariora non immerito numeratur.



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THE
CANCROID PHALANGIUM.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Eight *Legs*.

Two vertical and two lateral *Eyes*.

Antennæ resembling legs.

Abdomen rounded.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

PHALANGIUM with obovate depressed abdomen, and smooth chelæ, slightly hairy at the tips.

This little insect, which has long been known to naturalists, has been occasionally referred to very different genera. The celebrated and laborious Swammerdam has described it as a species of Scorpion. In the works of Roessel it is also regarded as a Scorpion. In the twelfth edition of the *Systema Naturæ* of Linnæus it is ranked under the genus *Phalangium*; while in the *Fauna Suecica* of the same author it is made an *Acarus*. The ingenious Degeer institutes for it a separate genus under the name of *Chelifer*. Lastly Fabricius in his *Systema Entomologiæ* has remanded it to the genus *Scorpio*, to which perhaps it is more nearly allied than to any other. This insect seems to vary considerably in size; those
which

which are found in our own country being much smaller than the representations given by Swammerdam, Roessel, and Seba. The microscopical figure in the annexed plate is executed with the greatest accuracy. The separate figure represents the head and thorax very much magnified, in order to shew the pectinated parts, which though differing in situation, are nearly of the same form as in scorpions. Fig. 1. shews the natural size of the English specimens. Linnæus accuses it (I believe most unjustly,) of sometimes getting under the skin, and raising a painful tumour. It is generally found on old walls, and sometimes amongst papers, &c., and is not a very common insect.



Shaw, George. 1791. "The Cancroid Phalangium, *Phalangium cancroides* [Pl. 85]." *The Naturalist's Miscellany* 3(XXVIII), <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.304505>.

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