

A NEW SPIDER OF THE GONDWANAN GENUS *EILICA*
FROM VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA (ARANEAE: GNAPHOSIDAE)

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Abstract

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Ellica mullaroo, new species, is the first laroniine gnaphosid from Victoria.

Introduction

The widespread, Gondwanan spider genus *Ellica* is currently known from America (10 species found from the southern United States to Chile), Africa (two species found from Sierra Leone to the Cape Province), and southern Asia (three species found in India and Uzbekistan) as well as Australia. The six Australian species documented in previous studies (Platnick, 1975, 1978, 1985) have been recorded from Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia. It was therefore with great interest that I examined a collection of an *Ellica* species from Victoria kindly made available by Dr Mark S. Harvey of the Department of Environmental Records of the Museum of Victoria. Not surprisingly, the species proved to be undescribed.

The spiders were collected through a pitfall-trapping program carried out in the arid and semi-arid regions of the north-western part of the state (with financial aid from the Land Conservation Council of Victoria). These habitats are worthy of much further study, not least to determine if the *Ellica* there have myrmecophilous habits similar to those of other members of the subfamily (Noonan, 1982).

The format of the description follows that of Platnick (1975); all measurements are in millimetres.

Gnaphosidae

Ellica mullaroo sp. nov.

Figures 1-4

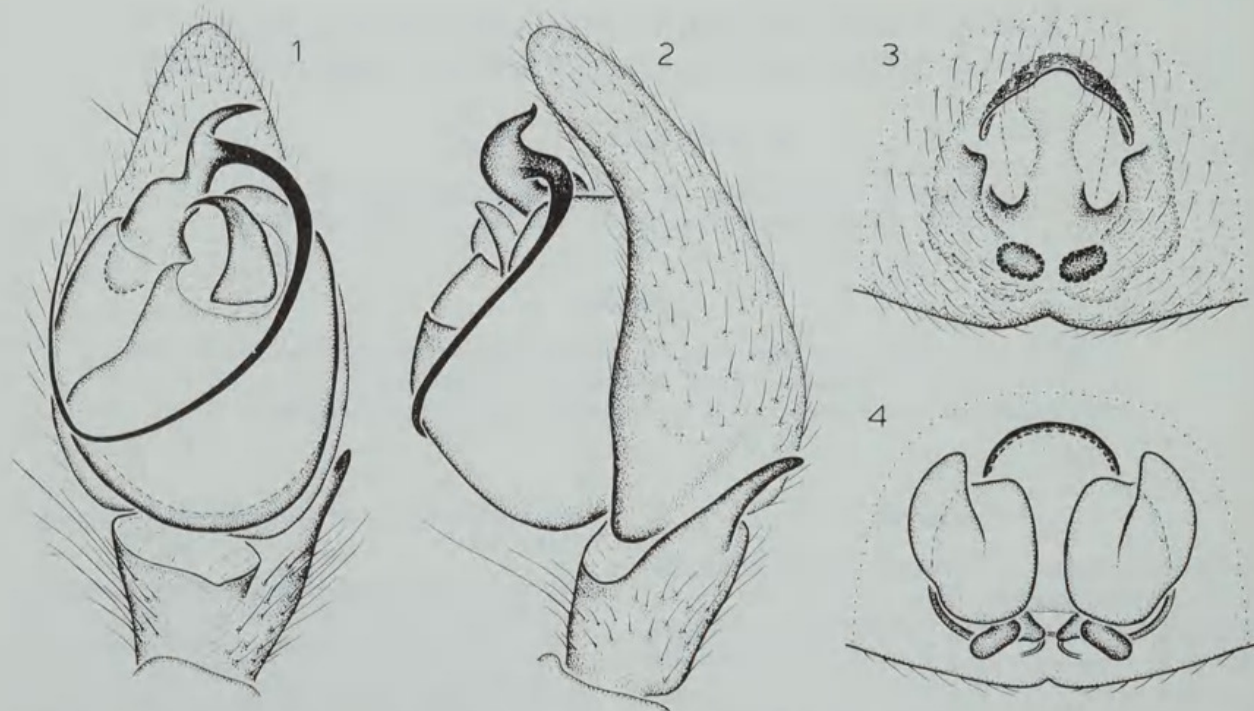
Types: Holotype male: Victoria, 15.8 km NE of Patchewollock (35°17'S, 142°19'E), drift fence pitfall trap at site 51, A. L. Yen, Oct 1985, Museum of Victoria, K712.

Paratype female: same data as holotype, Museum of Victoria, K713.

Other material examined. (Except as noted, all specimens were collected by A.L. Yen in drift fence pitfall traps during Nov 1985, and are deposited in the Museum of Victoria.) Victoria: 8.8 km N of Cullulleraine (34°12'S, 141°35'E), 2 males 1 female; 4.6 km E of Hattah (34°46'S, 142°19'E), Oct 1985, 2 males; 5.4 km E of Hattah (34°47'S, 142°20'E), Oct 1985, 2 males; 15 km SSE of Hattah (34°54'S, 142°15'E), Oct 1985, 2 males; 17 km SW of Hattah (34°51'S, 142°08'E), Oct 1985, 3 males; 7.7 km ENE of confluence of Lindsay River and Mullaroo Creek (34°07'S, 141°12'E), 1 female; 8.3 km SE of confluence of Lindsay River and Mullaroo Creek (34°11'S, 141°10'E), 1 male; 2 km N of Millewa Sth Bore (34°45'S, 141°04'E), 1 female; 3.1 km N of Millewa Sth Bore (34°45'S, 141°04'E), 1 male; 3.7 km N of Millewa Sth Bore (34°45'S, 141°04'E), 1 male; 17.8 km N of Millewa Sth Bore (34°37'S, 141°04'E), 1 male, 1 female; 19.4 km N of Millewa Sth Bore (34°36'S, 141°03'E), 1 male; 6.5 km SW of junction of Murray Valley Highway and Annuello Road (34°50'S, 142°34'E), Oct 1985, 2 males; 7.8 km SW of junction of Murray Valley Highway and Annuello Road (34°50'S, 142°33'E), Oct 1985, 3 males, 2 females (1 male, 1 female deposited in American Museum of Natural History); 8.1 km S of junction of Murray Valley Highway and Annuello Road (34°52'S, 142°37'E), Oct 1985, 1 male; 23.7 km SE of Murrayville (35°25'S, 141°23'E), 1 male, 2 females.

Diagnosis. Males resemble those of *E. contacta* Platnick (from Queensland and New South Wales) in having a relatively long embolar base bearing a semicircular distal projection, but differ in lacking a similar proximal projection and in having a much larger median apophysis (figs. 1, 2); females can easily be recognized by the arched anterior epigynal margin and paired paramedian openings (figs. 3, 4).

Description. Male: Total length 5.99. Carapace 2.35 long, 1.87 wide. Femur 11 1.94 long. Cara-



Figures 1-4. *Eilica mullaroo*, new species. 1. Left palp, ventral view. 2. Left palp, retrolateral view. 3. Epigynum, ventral view. 4. Epigynum, dorsal view.

pace brown with dark reticulations; abdominal dorsum gray with pair of longitudinal, paramedian anterior white stripes (as in Platnick, 1975, fig. 4) and posterior median white spot (as in Platnick, 1978, fig. 1); legs orange with distal tips of femora darkened. Cheliceral retromargin with three laminae set in strip of unsclerotized cuticle, two most distal ones large, most proximal one small, shifted prolaterally, sharply pointed; chelicerae medially excavate, lined anteromedially by series of short spines, similar spines lining distal margin of endites. Eye sizes and interdistances: AME 0.12, ALE 0.14, PME 0.16, PLE 0.12; AME-AME 0.12, AME-ALE 0.05, PME-PME 0.07, PME-PLE 0.09, ALE-PLE 0.12; MOQ length 0.41, front width 0.36, back width 0.39. Embolar base protuberant, distally twisted, with semicircular distal projection (fig. 1); retrolateral tibial apophysis narrow (fig. 2). Leg spination: tibiae: I p1-0-1, v2-2-2; II p0-0-1; III p1-1-1; IV d1-0-1, p1-1-1, v2-2-2; metatarsi: III p0-1-1, r0-1-1; IV p0-1-1, v2-2-2, r1-1-1.

Female: Total length 7.76. Carapace 3.49 long, 2.72 wide. Femur II 2.42 long. Coloration and chelicerae as in male. Eye sizes and interdistances: AME 0.14, ALE 0.14, PME 0.16, PLE 0.13; AME-AME 0.16, AME-ALE 0.05, PME-PME 0.15, PME-PLE 0.14, ALE-PLE 0.24; MOQ length 0.54, front width 0.44, back width 0.47. Anterior epigynal margin arched (fig. 3), posterolateral epigynal ducts narrow (fig. 4). Leg spination: femur

IV p0-0-1; tibiae: I p1-0-1, v2-2-2; II p1-0-1; III d1-0-1, p1-1-1; IV d1-0-1, p1-1-1, v2-2-2; metatarsi: III p1-1-2, r1-1-1; IV p1-1-1, v2-2-2, r1-1-1.

Etymology. The specific name is a noun in apposition taken from Mullaroo Creek where the species has been collected.

Distribution. Known only from north-western Victoria.

Acknowledgements

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