



## TAXONOMIC REVISION AND CLADISTIC ANALYSIS OF *AVICULARIA* LAMARCK, 1818 (ARANEAE, THERAPHOSIDAE, AVICULARIINAE) WITH DESCRIPTION OF THREE NEW AVICULARIINE GENERA

BY

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Photo: H.-W. Auer

*Avicularia merianae* Fukushima & Bertani sp. n.

ZooKeys 659 ♦ 2017  
Special Issue

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The family Theraphosidae, also known as tarantulas, is the largest family of mygalomorph spiders. The first tarantula genus erected was *Avicularia* Lamarck, 1818, which, until now, comprised 49 species, with distributional range stretching from Central to South America and Caribbean islands. Its type species has been the first mygalomorph species described. As a result, its taxonomic history is extensive and confusing, reflecting the knowledge and history of arachnology throughout the centuries. Even though the genus comprises a large number of species and has historical importance, it has never been revised. Herein, the genus is revised, and now comprises 12 species, being 3 new species; all are rediagnosed. Provided are figures of the diagnostic characters, as well as images of live specimens. Information on the type locality; type depository; distribution; and other pertinent taxonomic or biological data; is included. Featured are also keys for identification of all aviculariine genera, including *Avicularia* and the three newly described genera. Maps with records and information on species habitat are presented. Cladistic analyses have been carried out and the relationships regarding Aviculariinae subfamily are discussed.

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