



Within the incredibly rich millipede fauna of Southeast Asia, the “dragon millipedes” stand out by their striking colors and rather dramatic armature of spines. They belong to a group of millipedes which defend themselves by secreting hydrogen cyanide, and their frequently strong colors are certainly aposematic – they often don’t hide among leaf litter etc. like most other millipedes, but sit or crawl openly on rocks, soil or vegetation.

In the present work, the taxonomy of dragon millipedes is revised, and the group is split into five genera. One of these genera, *Desmoxytes*, is treated in detail where eight new species, most of them from Thailand, are described, all previously described species are re-described, and an identification key to all *Desmoxytes* species is presented.

The dragon millipedes gained significant fame when “the shocking pink dragon millipede”, *Desmoxytes purpuresea*, was described in 2007. Several of the new species described here are no less remarkable in color and armature than “the shocking pink”.

Ruttapon Srisonchai is a Ph.D. student at Chulalongkorn University. He has already published one paper describing four new species of dragon millipedes, and the present one is the first of a series of papers that each deal with a genus of dragon millipedes.

Somsak Panha is professor and head of the Animal Systematics Research Unit, Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Chulalongkorn University. Originally a malacologist, he has for ca. 10 years also been interested in millipedes and has supervised several myriapodological students, including Ruttapon Srisonchai.

Henrik Enghoff is professor at the Natural History Museum of Denmark, University of Copenhagen. He has worked with millipede taxonomy for more than 40 years and has published more than 250 papers on millipedes. Since 2006 he has collaborated closely with Somsak Panha and his lab. He is co-supervisor of Ruttapon Srisonchai.

Natdanai Likhitrakarn is assistant professor at the Division of Plant Protection, Faculty of Agricultural Production, Maejo University, Chiang Mai. He is a former student of Somsak Panha and has published many papers on the millipede family Paradoxosomatidae, to which the dragon millipedes belong.

A REVISION OF DRAGON MILLIPEDES I: GENUS *DESMOXYTES* CHAMBERLIN, 1923, WITH THE DESCRIPTION OF EIGHT NEW SPECIES (DIPLOPODA, POLYDESMIDA, PARADOXOSOMATIDAE)

BY

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Desmoxytes golovatchi Srisonchai et al., sp. n.

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