



**THE SPIDER FAMILY
MICROPHOLCOMMATIDAE
(ARACHNIDA, ARANEAE, ARANEOIDEA):
A RELIMITATION AND REVISION
AT THE GENERIC LEVEL**

BY MICHAEL G. RIX & MARK S. HARVEY



Gigiella milledgei Rix & Harvey, sp. n.

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The Micropholcommatidae are a family of tiny, distinctive araneoid spiders, known from southern-temperate habitats throughout Australasia and Chile. The greatest abundance of individuals and the largest diversity of taxa occur in the cool-temperate rainforests of south-eastern Australia and New Zealand, where micropholcommatid spiders can be very common within moss and leaf litter microhabitats. Although poorly studied biologically and largely neglected taxonomically, the Micropholcommatidae are a diverse lineage, with a significant – and previously unrecognised – generic diversity.

The monograph in this volume presents a complete generic-level revision of the spider family Micropholcommatidae. The phylogenetic position and internal phylogeny of the family are tested with two separate morphological cladistic analyses, the results of which inform a comprehensive generic-level classification. In total, 26 new species, 12 new genera, one new tribe and two new subfamilies are described, taking the total documented micropholcommatid fauna to 58 species. The distribution and Gondwanan biogeography of the family are also discussed, and natural history information is provided where known. Most importantly, the results of this paper present a taxonomic framework and a phylogenetic foundation for all future research on the Micropholcommatidae; a template by which new species can be described and existing species can be identified, and a valuable dataset for exploring phylogenetic hypotheses.

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