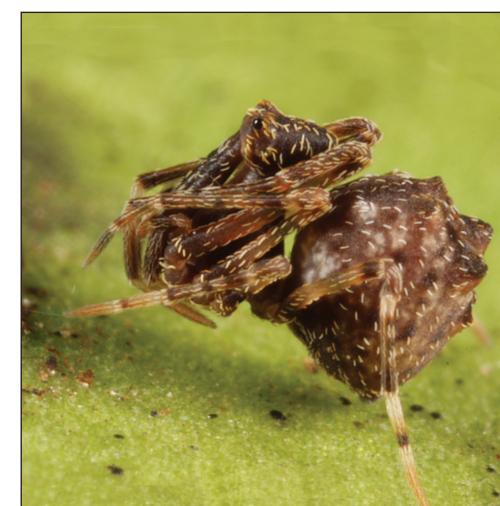


The Assassin Spiders of the family Archaeidae are an ancient and iconic lineage of basal araneomorph spiders, characterised by a specialised araneophagic ecology and unique, ‘pelican-like’ cephalic morphology. Found throughout the rainforests, wet sclerophyll forests and mesic heathlands of south-western, south-eastern and north-eastern Australia, the genus *Austrarchaea* Forster & Platnick, 1984 includes a diverse assemblage of relictual, largely short-range endemic species. With recent dedicated field surveys and significant advances in our understanding of archaeid biology and ecology, numerous new species of assassin spiders have been discovered in the montane subtropical and warm-temperate closed forests of mid-eastern Australia, including several rare or enigmatic taxa and species of conservation concern. This fauna is revised and 17 new species are described from south-eastern Queensland and eastern New South Wales: *A. alani* sp. n., *A. aleenae* sp. n., *A. binfordae* sp. n., *A. christopheri* sp. n., *A. clyneae* sp. n., *A. cunninghami* sp. n., *A. dianneae* sp. n., *A. harmsi* sp. n., *A. belenae* sp. n., *A. judyae* sp. n., *A. mascordi* sp. n., *A. mcguiganae* sp. n., *A. milledgei* sp. n., *A. monteithi* sp. n., *A. platnickorum* sp. n., *A. raveni* sp. n. and *A. smithae* sp. n. Adult specimens of the type species, *A. nodosa* (Forster, 1956) are redescribed from the Lamington Plateau, south-eastern Queensland, and distinguished from the sympatric species *A. dianneae* sp. n. A key to species and a molecular phylogenetic analysis of COI and COII mtDNA sequences complement the species-level taxonomy, with maps, habitat photos, natural history information and conservation assessments provided for all species.

AUSTRALIAN ASSASSINS, PART I: A REVIEW OF THE ASSASSIN SPIDERS (ARANEAE, ARCHAEIDAE) OF MID-EASTERN AUSTRALIA

MICHAEL G. RIX & MARK S. HARVEY



Austrarchaea raveni Rix & Harvey, sp. n.

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