

A Review of the Family Pherolioididae Paschoal in Australia (Acarina: Cryptostigmata: Plateremaeoidea)

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ABSTRACT. The paper reviews the family Pherolioididae (Plateremaeoidea) in Australia and a rediagnosis is given for the type genus, *Pheroliodes*. A monotypic genus *Neonooliodes* n.gen. is established for *N. ceroplastes* n.sp. Eight new *Pheroliodes* species are described: *P. springthorpei* n.sp., *P. barringtonensis* n.sp., *P. concavus* n.sp., *P. lindsayae* n.sp., *P. lordhowensis* n.sp., *P. monteithi* n.sp., *P. sicarius* n.sp. and *P. transversus* n.sp. *Octoliodes robustus* (Hunt & Lee) is recombined from *Pheroliodes*, a supplementary description and new records given, and a rediagnosis given for genus *Octoliodes*. A key is given for the 11 Australian species currently placed in the Pherolioididae. Characters of special significance for the family are discussed. A key is presented for ten plateremaeoid genera represented in Australia.

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This paper is the fourth in a series on Australian Plateremaeoidea *sensu* Marshall *et al.* (1987). It focusses on the Pherolioididae and particularly *Pheroliodes* Grandjean, the second most speciose genus in the superfamily in Australia after *Pedrocortesella* Hammer (Hunt, 1996a,b,c).

Australian species mostly inhabit ground litter and soils, though *Octoliodes robustus* n.comb. can be very common on tree trunks in moist areas. The family has an essentially Gondwanan distribution, having been recorded from South America, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, but outliers occur in Florida and in the Mediterranean region.

South American species placed in the family include 16 *Pheroliodes* species (Grandjean, 1964; Covarrubias,

1968; Hammer, 1958; Fernandez, 1987; Paschoal, 1987; Fernandez *et al.*, 1991; Baranek, 1984; 1986; Woas, 1992) and two species in *Lopholiodes* Paschoal (Paschoal, 1987). *Pheroliodes* also occurs in the Galapagos Islands (H. Schatz, pers. comm.), and one species has been recorded from Florida (Marshall *et al.* 1987). New Zealand includes two species originally placed in *Pedrocortesella* Hammer but subsequently placed in the genus *Octoliodes* by Paschoal (1987). There is a questionable record of *Pheroliodes* from South Africa (Balogh & Mahunka, 1966) and *Nooliodes glaber* (J. Balogh) from Madagascar may be referable to the Pherolioididae (see below). Mediterranean region records include two *Licnoliodes* species which Paschoal (1987) places in the Pherolioididae. Species from the eastern