

## NEW ZEALAND ORIBATEI—ABSTRACT

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The Oribatei, like most other groups of mites, have been only slightly studied in New Zealand. Smith (1896) recorded one species, *Liacarus longipilis* (Moniez) from ant nests in Canterbury, and Michael (1908) described six new species (*Nothrus cophinarius*, *Nothrus unguifera*, *Hermania phyllophora*, *Oribata bostocki*, *Notaspis spinulosa* and *Notaspis caudata*) from the Feilding area and Ruahine Ranges in the North Island. Apart from a report of a sub-fossil specimen from Lower Hutt, Wellington (Ramsay, 1960) there is no other published information. An unpublished study of the Oribatei of The Brothers, Cook Strait (Ramsay, 1959, thesis in the Library of Victoria University of Wellington) records twenty-five species of the following genera:— *Phthiracarus*, *Hoplophthiracarus*, *Oribotritia*, *Phyllhermannia*, *Acronothrus*, *Neoliodes*, *Arthrodamaeus*, *Ceratoppia*, a new genus of the family Carabodidae, *Oppia*, *Pelops*, a new genus of the family Ceratozetidae, *Peloribates*, *Liebstadia*, *Protoschelobates*, and two new genera of the family Scheloribatidae. Every species collected was found to be new. The main systematic groupings of the Oribatei are thus reported from New Zealand, except for the "soft-bodied" or "primitive" families and these will almost certainly be found to occur when the mainland fauna is investigated. The phenomenon known as aparity, in which the female is thought to retain her eggs until the young emerge and devour her, is described in two of the species from The Brothers.

From a distributional point of view the New Zealand Oribatei may be arranged in two groups. There are those such as *Oppia*, *Liebstadia*, *Ceratoppia*, *Phthiracarus*, *Neoliodes*, *Pelops*, and *Peloribates*, which have a wide occurrence elsewhere and are probably world-wide, and there are others such as *Phyllhermannia* and *Acronothrus* which appear to be confined to the Southern Hemisphere. It is interesting to note that a number of species recorded from the Juan Fernandez Islands by Tragardh (1931) are very similar to certain of those occurring on The Brothers, e.g. species of *Hoplophthiracarus*, *Neoliodes*, *Arthrodamaeus*, *Phyllhermannia*, and *Oppia*.

Many new records and new species of Oribatei await discovery in New Zealand.

## SPECIES LIST

Only one new record of an oribatid mite has been published since Lamb's (1952) List. The unpublished records mentioned above are not included in this list.

### Family Camisiidae—

*Nothrus cophinarius* Michael, 1908 (Michael, 1908)

*Nothrus unguifera* Michael, 1908 (Michael, 1908)

### Family Hermanniiidae—

*Hermannia phyllophora* Michael, 1908 (Michael, 1908)

### Family Oribatidae—

*Oribata bostocki* Michael, 1908 (Michael, 1908)

### Family Liacaridae—

*Liacarus longipilis* (Moniez)

(*Leiosoma longipilis*) (Moniez)—Smith, 1896

### Family Notaspidae—

*Notaspis spinulosa* Michael, 1908 (Michael, 1908)

*Notaspis caudata* Michael, 1908 (Michael, 1908)

### Family Scheloribatidae—

(Ramsay, 1960)

## LITERATURE

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