



# Article

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## Description of the male of *Lasiotheus* Paclt, 1963, its implication in Atelurinae supra-generic taxonomy and keys for the genera (Insecta: Zygentoma)

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### Abstract

The male is described by the first time for *Lasiotheus* Paclt, 1963 (Nicoletiidae: Atelurinae) upon a sample of *L. nanus* (Escherich, 1903) obtained in Gabon, from where the genus was previously unknown. The real independence of *Lasiotheus* relatively to *Gastrotheus* Casey, 1890 *s.s.* and to *Pseudogastrotheus* Mendes, 2003 (all previously considered under *Gastrotheus* Casey, 1890) is reinforced. Five tribes are recognized in Nicoletiidae (Atelurinae), characterized on morphological characteristics shared by groups of genera: Atelurini Remington, 1954, Atopatelurini **n. tribe**, Dinatelurini **n. tribe**, Dionychellini **n. tribe** and Grassiellini **n. tribe**. Identification keys are proposed to the ca. 70 genera today known in the subfamily.

**Key words:** Nicoletiidae, new tribes, key to genera, systematics, Thysanura

### Introduction

In a revision of the Nicoletiidae, Paclt (1963) described the subgenus *Gastrotheus* (*Lasiotheus*) to include three species, viz. *G. (L.) brachyurus* (Silvestri, 1918), *G. (L.) nanus* (Escherich, 1903) and *G. (L.) similellus* (Silvestri, 1949); *G. similellus* was designated as the type species of the subgenus. The bulk of the species described under *Gastrotheus* were then considered to remain in the nominate subgenus, whose type species was considered to be *G. (G.) termitarius* Casey, 1890.

Later, *G. (L.) brachyurus* was redescribed and *G. (L.) similellus* considered to be its junior synonym (Mendes 1988c), and so only two valid species remained in the subgenus: its nominate species, namely *G. (L.) brachyurus* and not *G. (L.) similellus* due to the established synonymy, and *G. (L.) nanus*, also redescribed (Mendes 1986).

More recently, Mendes (2003) redescribed *Gastrotheus* (*Lasiotheus*) and considered it to be valid at the generic level, and showed that *Lasiotheus* Paclt, 1963 was completely independent from the two other entities until then considered together under *G. (Gastrotheus)* Casey, 1890 *sensu* Paclt (1963). *Gastrotheus* Casey, 1890 *s.s.* became monotypic, with *G. termitarius* from Panama the sole species, and *Pseudogastrotheus* Mendes, 2003 was erected to include the remaining species described under *Gastrotheus sensu* Paclt (1963), from Brazil, sub-Saharan Africa, tropical Asia and Australia; its type-species, *Grassiella pallens* Escherich, 1903, was then designated. In contrast to *Pseudogastrotheus*, the genus *Lasiotheus* and the poorly known *Gastrotheus termitarius* have been known only as females.

The study of one male of *Lasiotheus nanus* recently obtained in central Gabon allowed the description of this sex in the genus and clearly reinforces the complete independence of *Lasiotheus* from *Gastrotheus s.s.* and *Pseudogastrotheus*, as previously hypothesized (Mendes 2003). It further allows a more comprehensive vision of how the knowledge of the secondary sexual characters together with the remaining morphological features is important for associating the genera of Atelurinae (*sensu* Mendes 2002a) into supra-generic units. Consequently, 5 tribes will be described and characterized within the subfamily.

Identification keys for the ca. 70 genera now known in the Atelurinae are also presented; the last previous comprehensive key (Paclt 1963) covered the 35 genera known a half-century ago, and characterization were made based on the limited knowledge then existent for the group.