

Salpesia Simon, 1901

Taxonomy

Salpesia is based on the species *Salpesia soricine* found in the Seychelles. Four Australian species, described by Keyserling in 1883, were transferred to this genus by Simon in 1901. However, comparison of the Australian species with a modern description of the Seychelles species shows they are misplaced. As there is no more suitable place available for them at present, the Australian species have been listed in *Salpesia* until the group is revised. The Australian species are *Salpesia bicolor*, *S. bimaculata*, *S. squalida* and *S. villosa*. *Salpesia bimaculata* appears to be the species named recently as *Saitis virgatus*. Unfortunately, most of the type specimens are lost for these species (Richardson and Žabka 2017). Further information on the species in Australia can be found in Richardson and Žabka (2017) and Whyte and Anderson (2017). The following description relates to the Australian species, not to the Seychelles type species.

Description

Salpesia spp. are medium-sized spiders, with a body length of about 6 mm. The head, viewed from above, is pear-shaped, widest behind the posterior lateral. The carapace is high, rising to a peak at the posterior lateral eyes and descending abruptly in the rear. The abdomen is heart-shaped or ovate. Chelicerae have a single (unident) small, sharp retromarginal tooth and one promarginal tooth. The legs are slender with little differentiation between the first and other pairs.

The males have a palp with a long, thin embolus forming an anticlockwise circle and a half, distal to the tegulum. The tegulum is square with a distal shoulder and a large proximal lobe. The palpal tibia has a single short, blunt retro-lateral tibial apophysis.

The female has a pair of large, poorly-sclerotised epigynal atria. Copulatory openings on the medial side of each atrium lead into insemination ducts which travel first anteriorly, then posteriorly down the mid-line to rounded spermathecae. The atria are close to the epigastric fold, which has a small median notch.

Biology

Salpesia spp. are mostly found in litter in damper parts of forest and riverine environments.

Distribution

The genus has been collected all over Australia including Tasmania.

References

Davies, V.T. & Žabka, M. 1989, Illustrated keys to the genera of jumping spiders (Araneae: Salticidae) in Australia. *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum* 27, 189-266.

Richardson, B.J. & Žabka, M. 2017. Salticidae. Arachnida: Araneomorphae. Canberra, Australian Faunal Directory. Australian Biological Resources Study, at <https://biodiversity.org.au/afd/taxa/SALTICIDAE>.

Whyte, R. and Anderson, G. 2017. *A field guide to the spiders of Australia*. Clayton: CSIRO Publishing 451pp.

* The information sheet should be read in the context of the associated diagrams and photographs. Diagrams explaining anatomical terms can be found in the 'Salticidae' pictures at the beginning of the list of genera.



Examples of live *Salpesia*
Illustrator (and ©) M. Newton



Aspects of the general morphology of *Salpesia*
Illustrators (and ©) B.J. Richardson (CSIRO),
M. Zabka (diag.) (QMB)



Palp and epigyne morphology of *Salpesia*
Illustrators (and ©) B.J. Richardson (CSIRO),
M. Newton (LM), M. Zabka (R) (QMB), E.
Keyserling (BL)