



**JOSEPH C. CHAMBERLIN**  
(1898–1962)

**A Tribute To  
Joseph C. Chamberlin  
on the occasion of the  
100th anniversary of his birth  
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*arranged by*

Mark S. Harvey  
Western Australian Museum, Francis Street,  
Perth, Western Australia 6000, Australia

and

Mark Judson  
Muséum national d'Historie naturelle,  
Laboratoire de Zoologie (Arthropodes), 61 rue de Buffon,  
75005 Paris, France

**PREFACE**

He who would study the false scorpions, either biologically or morphologically, will find his reward in the fascination of the bizarre and the little known, for indeed they constitute one of the most peculiar and one of the lesser known groups of animals. Small and harmless enough not to excite fear or repugnance; obscure and drab enough not to have attracted the attention of the “stamp-collecting” type of naturalist; rare enough to give pleasure in collecting; small enough to require the development of a considerable degree of skill in their preparation for study; numerous enough in point of history to throw light upon many problems of distribution—these are features that invest the false scorpions with a genuine interest.

Joseph Conrad Chamberlin  
(1931, *The Arachnid Order Chelonethida*, p. 6)

Despite their small size and inconspicuous nature, pseudoscorpions have occupied the minds of naturalists since Aristotle. However, early accounts failed to recognize their unique features, and indeed Linnaeus grouped the two species he recognized along with harvestmen and other distantly related arachnids in the genus *Phalangium*. Many European taxonomists of the 19th century, including the great arachnologists Carl L. Koch, Ludwig Koch and Eu-

gène Simon, made significant contributions to pseudoscorpion taxonomy, which were soon followed by others, including Luigi Balzan, Hans Hansen and Carl With, all of whom published insightful observations on the classification of the group.

However, it was not until the late 1920's that the classification of pseudoscorpions came under critical study again, by a taxonomist who had been trained under the watch-

ful eye of Gordon F. Ferris at Stanford University, California. By 1931, Joseph Conrad Chamberlin (1898–1962) had already published two major taxonomic synopses, as well as an exceptional synthesis on their morphology and biology that remains a benchmark against which all later papers must be judged. *'The Arachnid Order Chelonethida'* (published by Stanford University Press in 1931) quickly became the standard reference work for all pseudoscorpion workers, containing numerous detailed and meticulously illustrated observations of virtually all aspects of pseudoscorpion morphology, a novel classificatory system and a review of pseudoscorpion biology. Chamberlin's systematic framework included the recognition and naming of many new taxa, including several ordinal-group names (the Groups Heterosphyronida and Homosphyronida, and the Suborders Heterosphyronida, Diplosphyronida and Monosphyronida), and numerous new family-group, genus-group and species-group names. His classification was quickly adopted with little modification by Max Beier in 1932, working in the Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, whose monographic treatment of the world fauna, published in *Das Tierreich*, represents another landmark in the study of pseudoscorpions.

Although no fossils older than the Oligocene had been found when Chamberlin wrote the prescient paragraph quoted above, pseudoscorpions are an ancient group which date back to the Devonian, making them one of the oldest orders of organisms still alive today. Also, he could not have known that within 60 years of his major contributions to the study of pseudoscorpions, over 3000 species in 440 genera would be described from around the world—a far cry from the 800 or so species known by 1931. However, it is not only with regard to the taxonomy and classification of the group that we should be grateful to him,

since his numerous observations on diverse aspects of their morphology and biology are fitting testimony to his acute powers of deduction.

As a small token of the high regard in which Joseph Chamberlin is held by his fellow pseudoscorpion taxonomists, two genus-group names and 11 species have been named in his honor. These are listed in chronological order in their current combination: *Apocheiridium* (*Apocheiridium*) *chamberlini* Godfrey 1927; *Fissilicreagris chamberlini* (Beier 1931); *Afrosterophorus chamberlini* (Redikorzev 1938); *Haploditha chamberlinorum* Caporiacco 1951 (named for Chamberlin and his uncle, Ralph V. Chamberlin); *Kleptochthonius* (*Chamberlinochthonius*) Vachon 1952; *Pararoncus chamberlini* (Morikawa 1957); *Larca chamberlini* Benedict & Malcolm 1978; *Cheiridium chamberlini* Dumitresco & Orghidan 1981; *Chthonius* (*Chthonius*) *chamberlini* (Leclerc 1983); *Chamberlinarius* Heurtault 1990; *Hya chamberlini* Harvey 1993; *Tyrannochthonius chamberlini* Muchmore 1996; *Anysrius chamberlini* Harvey (this volume) and *Rhopalochernes chamberlini* Heurtault (this volume).

The purpose of the present tribute, in which we have brought together several scientific papers, along with a biography of J.C. Chamberlin, is to acknowledge the immense contribution that Joseph Conrad Chamberlin has made to the study of pseudoscorpions. December 23, 1998 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of an exceptional arachnologist, whose foresight and keen eye have left us a published legacy which will continue well into the next millennium.

We wish to thank the Executive Board of the American Arachnological Society, and especially Jim Berry and Petra Sierwald, who have made this tribute possible.

**Mark S. Harvey:** Western Australian Museum, Perth