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NATURE NOTE

Presence of the Spider Family Titanoecidae in Trinidad and Tobago

Sewlal and Cutler (2003) list 54 spider families on Trinidad and Tobago and postulated that 12 others might exist in the twin-island state. However, these additional families were included based on the fact that Trinidad and Tobago separated from the South American continent 16,000 years ago (Kenny 1995). Therefore, one can make the assumption that the biota north of the Amazon and east of the Andes would be similar to that found in Trinidad and Tobago. Subsequent studies have confirmed the presence of six additional families (Cutler 2005, Sewlal and Cutler 2003, Sewlal and Alayón 2007, Sewlal 2009).

A review of material collected between 2002 and 2009 in my collection revealed a specimen belonging to the Titanoecidae collected from deciduous seasonal forest in Chaguaramas. Sewlal and Cutler (2003) gave a brief description of this family and suggested its presence in Trinidad, which is now confirmed.

The confirmation of this family brings the total number of spider families known from Trinidad and Tobago to 50.

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