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NOTE

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John T.D. Caleb

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WHAT IS IN A NAME? THE BIRTHRIGHT OF *OXYOPES NILGIRICUS* SHERRIFFS, 1955 (ARANEAE: OXYOPIDAE)

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While studying Lynx spider collections from the Oriental region, Sherriffs (1955) described two new species, namely *Oxyopes daksina* Sherriffs, 1955 (Sri Lanka) and *O. nilgiricus* Sherriffs, 1955 (southern India and Sri Lanka). The descriptions were based on collections deposited in the British Museum of Natural History (BMNH), London. Sherriffs designated types for the former species; he, however, did not seem to designate any specific holotype or paratype for the latter. He examined one adult male, collected by Oates from the Nilgiri Mountains, southern India. Additionally, he examined other material (1 male and 1 female) collected by Barnes from Sri Lanka (erstwhile Ceylon). It is quite obvious that the specimen from the Nilgiris could be the holotype since he christened the species *O. nilgiricus* after the Nilgiri Mountains.

The species superficially resembles *O. hindostanicus* Pocock, 1901, but is different in its palpal configuration; the palpal patella does not bear any apophysis (whereas two retrolateral apophyses are present in *O. hindostanicus*) (cf. Fig. 32 with Fig. 34 in Sherriffs 1955). He mentions, in particular, the second male from Sri Lanka to be of interest due to the peculiar morphology

of its right palp. It probably was due to a malformation or a physical injury that occurred either while hunting prey or from a previous mating session with an aggressive female which ended up in conflict.

The species was, however, overlooked by subsequent authors who enlisted the spider diversity of India, from Tikader (1987), Siliwal et al. (2005), and Sebastian & Peter (2009) to Keswani et al. (2012). The distribution of the species as shown in the world catalog also mentions only Sri Lanka (WSC 2018). It is nevertheless astounding, that a species bearing its origin in its name, to be missing from the lists for about 63 years since its first description in 1955.

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