**Hypsocephalus dahlis** is a junior synonym of *Microneta pusilla* (Araneae, Linyphiidae)

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**Abstract:** Comparison of the detailed species-specific original drawings of *Microneta pusilla* Menge, 1869 with the holotype of *Hypsocephalus dahlis* (Lessert, 1909) and the record of one female close to the type locality of *Microneta pusilla* in Gdańsk, Poland indicate that *Hypsocephalus dahlis* is a junior synonym of *Microneta pusilla*. *Hypsocephalus pusillus* (Menge, 1869) is therefore proposed as the valid name for this species. Here we discuss the taxonomic status of both species and present a distribution map that accounts for records in Poland.

**Key words:** Central Europe, Poland, spiders, taxonomy

The status of the nominal taxa *Microneta pusilla* Menge, 1869 and *Hypsocephalus dahlis* (Lessert, 1909) have long been obscure. Both names were used before and after WUNDERLICH (1972) synonymised these species and also after MILLIDGE (1978) declared *M. pusilla* a *nomen dubium*. FRICK (2007) summarised all available data about the two nominal species. However, soon after this publication, the second author of the present article discovered a new record of one female close to the type locality of *M. pusilla*, which again raised questions about the nomenclatural status of *H. dahlis* and *M. pusilla*.

**Results and Discussion**

**Systematics**

The recent record of one female close to the type locality of *M. pusilla* indicates that *H. dahlis* is indeed a junior synonym of *M. pusilla*. A closer look at the original drawings of MENGE (1869) revealed that they are detailed enough to recognise this species. They show the tip of the embolus, which clearly differentiates it from other *Hypsocephalus* species. Comparison of these figures with the holotype of *Hypsocephalus dahlis* (Lessert, 1909) showed that they are conspecific (see FRICK 2007 for disposition of types). Consequently, we suggest resurrecting *M. pusilla* and accordingly consider *Hypsocephalus pusillus* (Menge, 1869) to be the valid name for this species.

However, the following arguments should briefly be discussed: First, no type material of *M. pusilla* is available. We tried to find the material on which Menge based his descriptions of *M. pusilla* without success. Some of his material was given to other collections before World War II. Checking the collections of the Natural History Museum of Stockholm (SE) and the Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge (USA) – which are known to harbour such material – revealed no specimens of this species. If the remaining material was still in Gdańsk at that time, it disappeared towards the end of World War II (Kraus in litt.). Absence of types is very common in zoological nomenclature and in our opinion it is not reason enough *per se* to declare a name a *nomen dubium* if detailed figures with distinct characters are available. This condition is met in the present case. Therefore, MILLIDGE’S (1978) declaration of *M. pusillus* as *nomen dubium* solely because of the absence of a name-bearing type is not followed here.

The designation of a neotype for *M. pusillus* could therefore be suggested. The International Code of Zoological Nomenclature proposes the following conditions, under which a neotype should be designated (article 75.1): “no name-bearing type specimen is believed to be extant” and “that a name-bearing type is necessary to define the nominal taxon objectively” (INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE 1999). While the first condition is most probably met, the second is not due to the presence of detailed species-
The distribution of *H. pusillus* has been summarised in FRICK (2007) including the records in Poland, of which only the regions (voivodship) were known. Since then, new information on the records in Poland are available and are presented here including a completed distribution map (Fig. 1):

- **Menge** (1869: 232), the same specimens are mentioned in PRÓSZYNSKI & STAREGА (1971: 143) and STAREGА (1983: 195): Pomerania, Gdańsk, Studzienka (woodland in Gdańsk), (54°22'21"N, 18°36'22"E), leg. A. Menge;
- **Starega** (new locality): Pomerania, Gdańsk-Górki Wschodnie (54°21'43"N, 18°48'15"E), dunes on the seacoast, in dry alluvial, 10.VII.1986 (1♂), leg. W. Jędryczkowski, det. W. Starega.

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