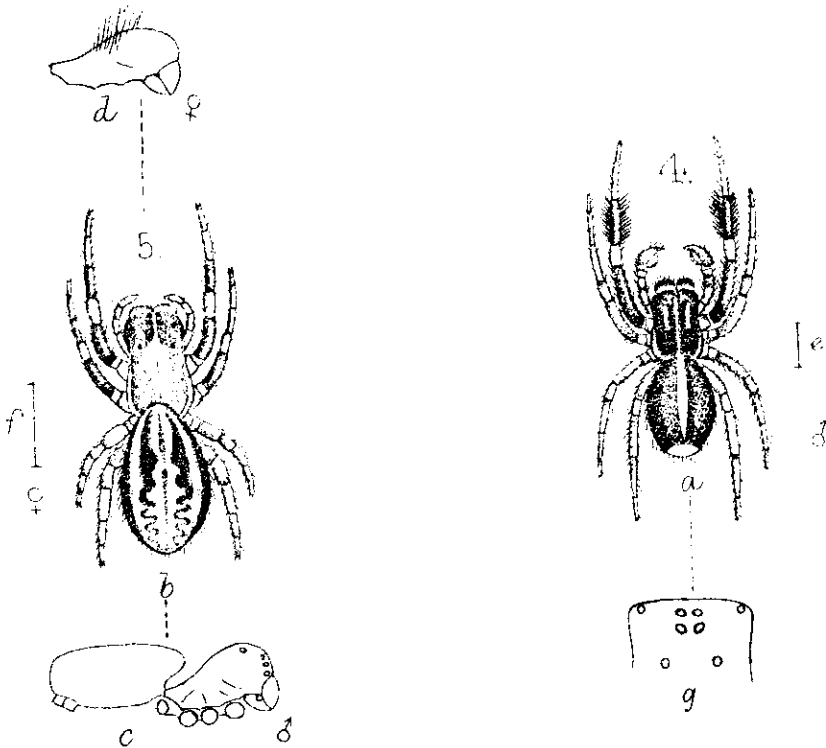


Cambridge, O. P.-. 1889. On some new species and a new genus of Araneida. Proc. zool. Soc. Lond. 1889: 42-44.

Stegodyphus mimosarum Pavesi, 1873

STEGODYPHUS GREGARIUS, sp. n. (Plate II. figs. 4, 5.)

Adult female. Length $2\frac{1}{2}$ -4 lines; length of cephalothorax in a



specimen of 3 lines long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lines; breadth of cephalothorax rather over 1 line.

Adult male. Length $1\frac{3}{4}$ lines.

The sexes are very dissimilar in appearance. In the *female* the cephalothorax is oblong, caput very large, hinder slope abrupt, upper surface moderately convex; the ocular area occupies at least one third of the whole length of the cephalothorax, and the height of the clypeus is scarcely equal to the length of the area of the four central eyes. The colour is yellow-brown, with a broad dark brown longitudinal band on each side. The whole is clothed with coarsish grey hairs, showing most conspicuously on the lateral margins, on the central space between the dark lateral bands, being especially long and conspicuous at the thoracic junction, and forming some white lines connecting the eyes and bisecting the area of the four central ones.

The *eyes* form a very large quadrangle, whose posterior side is the shortest and its anterior much the longest. They are small, the posterior eyes of the central group largest, the rest apparently nearly equal. Those of the central group are close together at the fore extremity of the quadrangle, but not contiguous, forming a small square or trapezoid, whose anterior side is shorter than the posterior. The interval between the eyes of these two sides respectively is greater than a diameter, while the interval between each anterior and the posterior eye next to it is less than the diameter of an anterior eye.

The *legs* are strong and of moderate length, 1, 4, 2, 3, of a yellow-brown colour; the femora, as well as the tibiæ of the first and second pairs, nearly black; in some examples the legs have a somewhat annulose appearance. They are almost entirely destitute of spines, but thickly clothed with hairs, of which many are grey, giving them a hoary look. The tibiæ of the first two pairs are rather stouter than the rest, and the metatarsi of the first pair, in old females, are of a brightish red hue, those of the second pair less so. Towards the inner side of the metatarsi of the fourth pair is a calamistrum running the whole length of the joint, but much concealed by the other hairs.

Falces strong, of moderate length, vertical, subconical, darker in colour than the cephalothorax, and clothed with grey hairs, a band across the base in front being more dense and conspicuously white. The fangs are bright red-brown, but rather weak.

The *maxilla*, *labium*, and *sternum* are deep brown, clothed with grey hairs, and of normal form.

The *abdomen* is oval, a little broader in some examples behind than in front; its general colour is more or less bright warm yellow-brown, clothed with grey and other hairs; on the upperside are three longitudinal, more or less well-defined dark brown stripes, of which the central one is the narrowest and least conspicuous, and the lateral ones are often dentated posteriorly. The lateral margins and sides also are dark black-brown, and on the underside are two conspicuous reddish-yellow-brown patches, placed transversely and

clothed with grey hairs. The spinners are short, and in front of the ordinary ones is a transverse spinning-organ, always found correlated with the calamistrum on the fourth pair of legs.

The *male*, besides being very much smaller than the female, has the cephalothorax of a very deep black-brown hue, with a marginal stripe on each side and in front of white hairs, and a narrow longitudinal stripe of the same kind bisecting the ocular area, and a few other white hairs near the posterior eyes and on the occiput. The *legs* are longer than in the female, especially those of the first pair; they are of a bright orange-red colour, the femora and tibiæ of the first pair suffused with blackish, the tibiæ rather enlarged and thickly clothed with long black hairs; besides other hairs all the legs are furnished more or less with some white ones on their upper side. The *abdomen* is of a deep black-brown hue, with a pale yellow-brown longitudinal central tapering stripe, clothed with white hairs, and reaching a transverse bar of the same kind just above the spinners; and on the underside are two oblique, elongate pale spots or patches similarly clothed, and placed transversely near the spiracular plates. The *palpi* are short and of a black-brown hue; the radial joint is shorter than the cubital; this latter joint has a fore margin of conspicuous white hairs; digital joint rather large, and its fore extremity drawn out. The palpal organs are simple, consisting of a roundish basal bulb, with a somewhat twisted paler process at its anterior side reaching not quite to the end of the digital joint. The *sternum* is black, clothed with coarse pale grey hairs.

A nest of this spider containing numerous live individuals of both sexes, some adult, some immature, was sent a short time ago by Col. Bowker, from Durban, to Lord Walsingham, who, kindly acting on my suggestion, sent the whole to this Society's Gardens, where, as I understand from Mr. Arthur Thomson, in whose care they are placed, the whole family are in a very active and thriving state. The nest is of considerable size, and filled a box of 2 feet long by 9 inches wide and 5 deep. Above this nest I hear that the spiders have now spun lines up to the top of the case in which they have been placed, as though for the ensnaring of flies, &c.; but as their work is entirely nocturnal, no observations have yet been practicable in respect to this most interesting part of a spider's economy. They appear to devour cockroaches and crickets, tearing them to pieces in concert, and each carrying off his share of the prey, like a pack of hounds breaking up a fox.

This spider is allied to *Stegodyphus acanthophilus*, Dufour, of Southern Europe, Palestine, and Syria, but is smaller, differs greatly in colour and markings, and is, so far as I am aware, unique in its gregarious habits. Some of the examples had died during the long transit from Durban to England, and from these the descriptions have been made.