

# The sternal pore areas of geophilomorph centipedes (Chilopoda: Geophilomorpha)

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Most geophilomorph centipedes have segmental clusters of exocrine glands whose opening pores are arranged in more or less well-defined sternal areas. We describe here the cuticular structures forming and/or accompanying the gland openings on the sternites and the shape of the pore areas along the body axis in representatives of most geophilomorph families. The cuticular ring around the pore may exhibit either of two forms. In Himantariidae (*Himantarium*) and in Dignathodontidae (*Henia*) the ring looks like a continuous ribbon with a visible suture, whereas in the representatives of the remaining families no suture is seen. As to the distribution of the pores on ventral surface of the body, we record the presence of pores on the last leg-bearing segment of *Clinopodes flavidus*, whereas that segment was described as poreless in all geophilomorphs. We also provide a taxonomic survey of shape and distribution of pore areas in the individual families, where the pore areas may take very different shapes that we regard as transformational homologues. As for the segmental distribution of sternal pore areas, there is a considerable amount of complexity along the trunk of geophilomorph centipedes, in contrast to the apparently uniform trunk structure.

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ADDITIONAL KEY WORDS:—homology – serial homology – positional homology.

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## INTRODUCTION

Most geophilomorph centipedes have voluminous clusters of exocrine glands whose opening pores are arranged in ventral areas known as sternal pore areas (SPAs).

These glands have been studied from a histological point of view by Brade-Birks & Brade-Birks (1920) and by Koch (1927); their fine structure

has been investigated more recently by Turcato & Minelli (1990) on *Pleurogeophilus mediterraneus* (Meinert, 1870) and by Hopkin & Anger (1992) on *Henia vesuviana* (Newport, 1844). We are very poorly informed about the chemistry of the secretion of the glands, which seems to be quite different within the order: Jones *et al.* (1976) reported the presence of cyanide derivatives in the secretion of a '*Geophilus vittatus*' (true identity uncertain), whereas Hopkin *et al.* (1990) identified proteinaceous components in the glue-like secretion of *Henia vesuviana*.

In the present paper we deal with the morphology of the cuticular structures forming and/or accompanying the gland openings on the sternites, and the shape and distribution of SPAs along the body axis.

Since the nineteenth century, taxonomists have recognized the diagnostic importance of the differences in size, form and distribution of SPAs among geophilomorph centipedes. Some references to SPAs are found in Koch (1863) and Bergsøe & Meinert (1866), but the first true comparisons and illustrations of many species were given by Meinert (1870). The prominence of these characters in geophilomorph taxonomy can be fully appreciated by a perusal of Attems' monograph (1929) and of the more recent literature. However, we do not know in detail how variable these characters are within a species and to what degree they change with age and maturity. More important, the different kinds and different segmental arrangements of SPAs have never been rationally compared with due regards to questions of serial and special homology. In addition, no effort has been made to define the polarity of the evolutionary changes between the different character states exhibited by the different taxa. Therefore, it has not been possible to identify the likely instances of homoplasy. As we will see, homoplasy seems to have occurred many times, especially when rudimentation or disappearance of the pore areas are involved.

In this paper we provide an overall review of the structure and taxonomic distribution of geophilomorph SPAs.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

By scanning electron microscopy (SEM), using a Cambridge Stereoscan 250, we examined the individual pores and the surrounding cuticular area of the following species representative of most geophilomorph families currently recognized: *Himantarium gabrielis* (Linnaeus, 1767) (Himantariidae); *Henia bicarinata* (Meinert, 1870) (Dignathodontidae); *Schendyla carniolensis* Verhoeff, 1902 (Schendylidae); *Ballophilus* sp. (Ballophilidae); *Orya barbarica* (Gervais, 1835) (Oryidae); *Geophilus richardi* (Brölemann, 1904), *Geophilus insculptus* Attems, 1895, *Clinopodes flavidus* Koch, 1847 and *Pleurogeophilus mediterraneus* (Meinert, 1870) (Geophilidae); *Strigamia crassipes* (Koch, 1835) (Linotaeniidae); *Dicelophilus carniolensis* (Koch, 1847) (Mecistocephalidae).

Size, shape and distribution along the body axis of SPAs have been observed on lactophenol cleared specimens of *c.* 100 species. For species we were unable to study personally, we obtained information from Attems (1929) and more recent literature (see Table 1). Taxonomic work of the senior author currently in progress has been incorporated into our database.

During our original investigations we quickly realized the unreliability of

TABLE 1. Homogeneous and heterogeneous SPASPs in the individual families of Geophilomorpha. Letters refer to the SPAs patterns shown in Fig. 25. Ø no pores on the sternite; # sparse pores on the sternite.

Family	SPASPs	Refs.
Himantariidae	hom: Ø, #, B, C, D het: ABC, BC, BØ, CØ, DØ	1-26
Dignathodontidae	hom: Ø, E, F, G	1, 27
Oryidae	hom: Ø, #, H, I, L, M het: HN, ILK, ILN, JL, JØ	1, 28-41
Eriphantidae	het: OP	42
Gonibregmatidae	hom: Ø, Q, U, V, W het: QRQ, WTS, WU	1, 33, 43-45
Schendylidae	hom: Ø, d, f het: aha, bcb, dc, df, dh, ed, eh, ehe, fhf, gfd, aØ, bØ, cØ, dØ, dcØ, dfØ, dhØ, cØ, ehØ, fØ	1-2, 7-8, 18, 23, 27-28, 33, 37, 39, 41, 46-87
Ballophilidae	hom: #, i, j, k, l, m, n,	1, 3, 8, 30, 32, 37, 39, 41, 48, 59-60, 88-98
Geophilidae	hom: Ø, #, a, c, d, e, f, g, h, j, m het: Øbcb, Øe, cdg, cf, eg, ege, df, dg, dgd, dge, dfg, dgh, dmif, eg, ege, egm, fc, fd, fe, fg, fge, ffg, fhf, fof, ghg, gj, glf, hf, hg, hj, ihh, jgf, jhj, klf, mhg, nm, cØ, dØ, dfØ, dgØ, eØ, fØ, feØ, fgØ, gØ, hØ, iØ	1-4, 6-9, 11, 22-23, 26-28, 30, 32-33, 37, 39, 46, 48-49, 51-52, 58-61, 66, 72, 82, 86-90, 96-146
Linotaeniidae	hom: Ø, p, q, s het: pq, qp, qr	1, 6-7, 33, 61, 63, 91, 147-156

Numbers refer to the following references: 1 Attems, 1929; 2 Attems, 1934a; 3 Attems, 1947; 4 Attems, 1951; 5 Chamberlin, 1930a; 6 Chamberlin, 1938; 7 Chamberlin, 1941a; 8 Chamberlin, 1943a; 9 Chamberlin, 1944b; 10 Chamberlin, 1946c; 11 Chamberlin, 1953b; 12 Chamberlin, 1964; 13 Crabill, 1953; 14 Crabill, 1959c; 15 Crabill, 1960b; 16 Crabill, 1969b; 17 Eason, 1962; 18 Lignau, 1929a; 19 Lignau, 1929b; 20 Matic & Darabantu, 1969; 21 Matic & Darabantu, 1974; 22 Verhoeff, 1930; 23 Verhoeff, 1934a; 24 Verhoeff, 1938c; 25 Verhoeff, 1938d; 26 Verhoeff, 1943; 27 Folkmanova & Dobroruka, 1960; 28 Attems, 1952b; 29 Chamberlin, 1939; 30 Chamberlin, 1941b; 31 Chamberlin, 1941c; 32 Chamberlin, 1950b; 33 Chamberlin, 1955-56; 34 Crabill, 1959a; 35 Crabill, 1968b; 36 Crabill, 1968c; 37 Demange, 1963; 38 Lawrence, 1953; 39 Lawrence, 1960; 40 Machado, 1951; 41 Turk, 1955; 42 Crabill, 1970; 43 Attems, 1930b; 44 Chamberlin, 1963; 45 Chamberlin, 1965; 46 Attems, 1934b; 47 Attems, 1939; 48 Attems, 1953; 49 Chamberlin, 1940d; 50 Chamberlin, 1942a; 51 Chamberlin, 1942b; 52 Chamberlin, 1946b; 53 Chamberlin, 1946d; 54 Chamberlin, 1947a; 55 Chamberlin, 1947b; 56 Chamberlin, 1948; 57 Chamberlin, 1950a; 58 Chamberlin, 1952b; 59 Chamberlin, 1953a; 60 Chamberlin, 1957; 61 Chamberlin, 1960a; 62 Chamberlin, 1962b; 63 Chamberlin & Mulaik, 1940; 64 Crabill, 1958; 65 Crabill, 1959b; 66 Crabill, 1960a; 67 Crabill, 1960c; 68 Crabill, 1961a; 69 Crabill, 1968a; 70 Demange, 1969; 71 Dobroruka, 1959; 72 Folkmanova, 1956; 73 Hoffman & Pereira, 1991; 74 Kaczmarek, 1962; 75 Kaczmarek, 1969; 76 Mauriès, 1968; 77 Pereira, 1981b; 78 Pereira, 1984a; 79 Pereira, 1984b; 80 Pereira & Coscarón, 1975-76; 81 Pereira & Demange, 1991; 82 Pereira & Hoffman, 1993; 83 Shear & Peck, 1992; 84 Shinohara, 1970; 85 Titova, 1972; 86 Verhoeff, 1937a; 87 Verhoeff, 1940; 88 Archey, 1936; 89 Chamberlin, 1940a; 90 Chamberlin, 1943b; 91 Chamberlin, 1944a; 92 Chamberlin, 1945; 93 Chamberlin, 1958; 94 Crabill, 1960b; 95 Demange & Pereira, 1985; 96 Matic, Negrea & Fundora Martinez, 1977; 97 Verhoeff, 1939a; 98 Verhoeff, 1951; 99 Attems, 1930a; 100 Attems, 1937; 101 Attems, 1938; 102 Attems, 1952a; 103 Capuse, 1968; 104 Chamberlin, 1928a; 105 Chamberlin, 1928b; 106 Chamberlin, 1930b; 107 Chamberlin, 1940b; 108 Chamberlin, 1940c; 109 Chamberlin, 1941d; 110 Chamberlin, 1946a; 111 Chamberlin, 1951; 112 Chamberlin, 1952a; 113 Chamberlin, 1955; 114 Chamberlin, 1956; 115 Chamberlin, 1960b; 116 Chamberlin, 1962a; 117 Crabill, 1949; 118 Crabill, 1963; 119 Crabill, 1964; 120 Crabill, 1969a; 121 Dobroruka, 1969; 122 Dobroruka, 1973; 123 Fahlander, 1935; 124 Folkmanova, 1928; 125 Folkmanova, 1959; 126 Jones, 1989; 127 Kaczmarek, 1970; 128 Lawrence, 1955; 129 Lawrence, 1959; 130 Lewis, Jones & Keay, 1988; 131 Loksa, 1971; 132 Machado, 1953; 133 Minelli, 1982a; 134 Minelli, 1983; 135 Pereira, 1981a; 136 Pereira, 1984c; 137 Silvestri, 1935a; 138 Silvestri, 1935b; 139 Verhoeff, 1928; 140 Verhoeff, 1937b; 141 Verhoeff, 1938a; 142 Verhoeff, 1939b; 143 Verhoeff, 1941a; 144 Verhoeff, 1941b; 145 Verhoeff, 1942a; 146 Verhoeff, 1945; 147 Chamberlin, 1954; 148 Chamberlin, 1966; 149 Crabill, 1954; 150 Crabill, 1962a; 151 Crabill, 1962b; 152 Shinohara, 1981; 153 Silvestri, 1929; 154 Verhoeff, 1934b; 155 Verhoeff, 1935; 156 Verhoeff, 1938b.

many old descriptions. For example, we were able to see a few scattered pores on the last leg-bearing segment of *Clinopodes flavidus*, whereas all current descriptions in the literature consider that segment to be poreless in all geophilomorphs (cf. below, p. 193). An original redescription of all known species is far beyond the scope of this article. However, we are confident that the sample we have studied provides sufficient evidence to reveal some patterns of taxonomic importance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Morphology of gland pores*

With the exception of *Geophilus richardi* and *Dicellyphilus carniolensis*, all species we have investigated by SEM have gland openings (Figs 1–19) in the form of cuticular pores circumscribed by a ring. The diameter of individual pores ranges from 2 to 4  $\mu\text{m}$ , according to species and does not change with age and shows no substantial variation, either within a single area, or between sternites.

Two kinds of cuticular rings may be recognized. In *Himantarium* and in *Henia* ring type 1 looks like a continuous ribbon with a visible suture. (Fig. 6, arrow), whereas in the remaining species (ring type 2) no suture is seen (Fig. 19). These different structures are probably the result from different morphogenetic processes. We wonder whether these differences are also mirrored in function (cf. Hopkin *et al.*, 1990).

This structural difference allows, Himantariidae and Dignathodontidae, both with ring type 1, to be distinguished from the remaining families, all with ring type 2. We have no data concerning ring type in the males of *Brahmaputrus poriger* Verhoeff, 1942, the only representative within the generally poreless Mecistocephalidae with sternal pores.

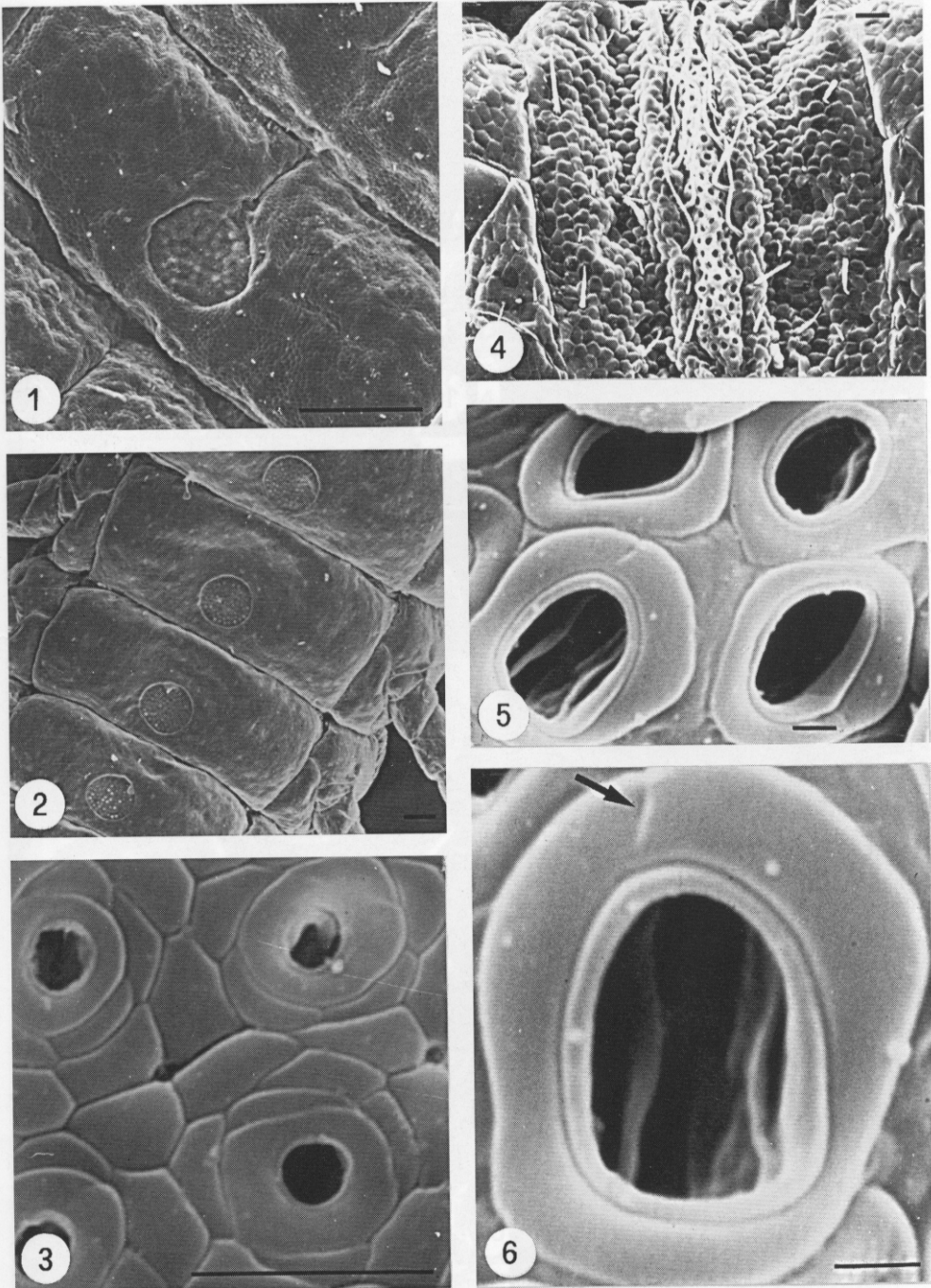
Concerning the polygonal fields of the cuticle ('cells'), those bearing pores are surrounded by several simple cells. Both the spatial arrangement of these cells and the distance between pores vary according to species. However, closely related species such as *Pleurogeophilus mediterraneus*, *Geophilus insculptus* and *Clinopodes flavidus* (Figs. 17, 18), all belonging to the family Geophilidae, exhibit a very similar arrangement of cells: between two neighbouring pores there are nearly always three or more conventional cells and the mean distance between two neighbouring pores is about 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

In *Schendyla* (Fig. 13), both the shape of the cuticular cells and the mean distance between pores are similar to those in geophilids; however, owing to the larger average size of the conventional cuticular cells in *Schendyla*, there is a smaller number of these cells between neighbouring pores.

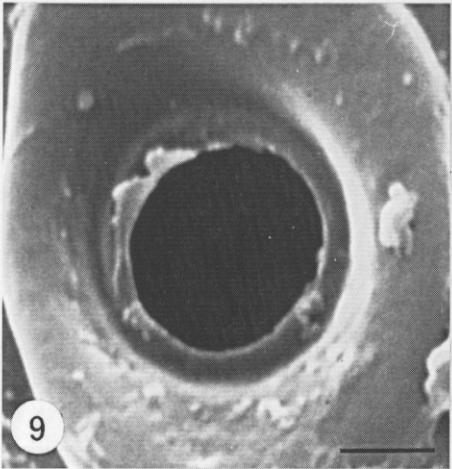
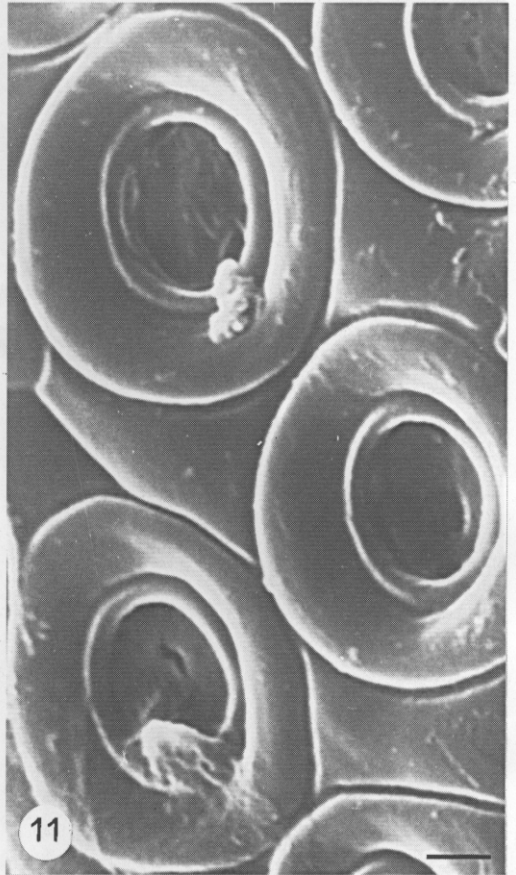
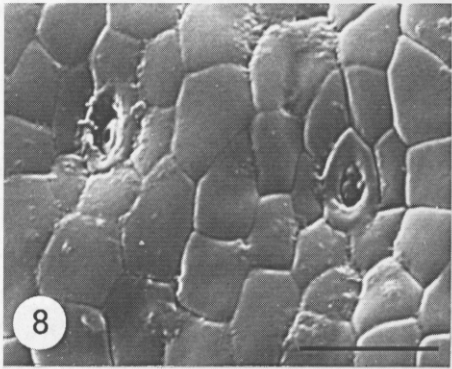
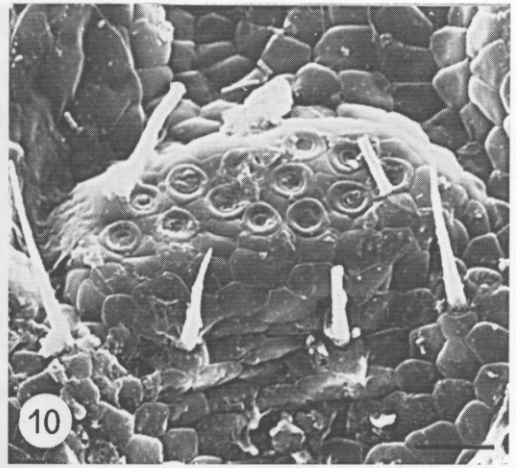
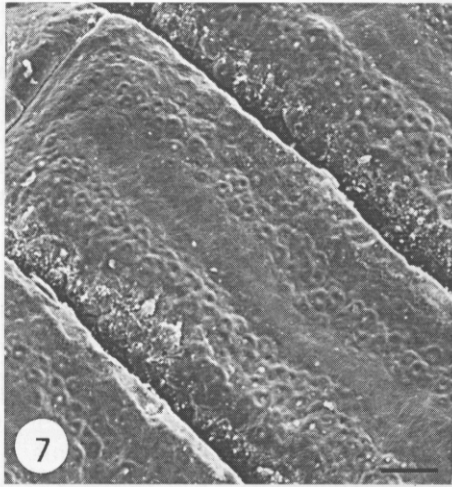
In *Strigamia crassipes* (Fig. 16), the arrangement is quite similar, with three or more conventional cells between neighbouring pores; but these are only about 6  $\mu\text{m}$  apart.

At variance with the previous genera, in *Henia* (Figs 5, 6) the pore-lining cells are often contiguous, without conventional cells in between; accordingly, the pore-to-pore distance is reduced to 4  $\mu\text{m}$ .

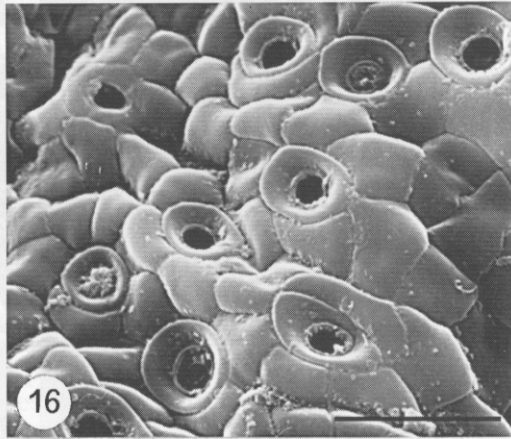
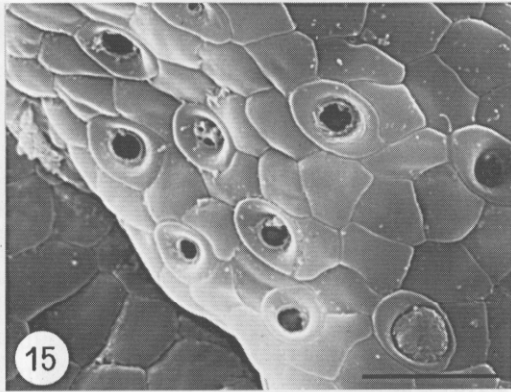
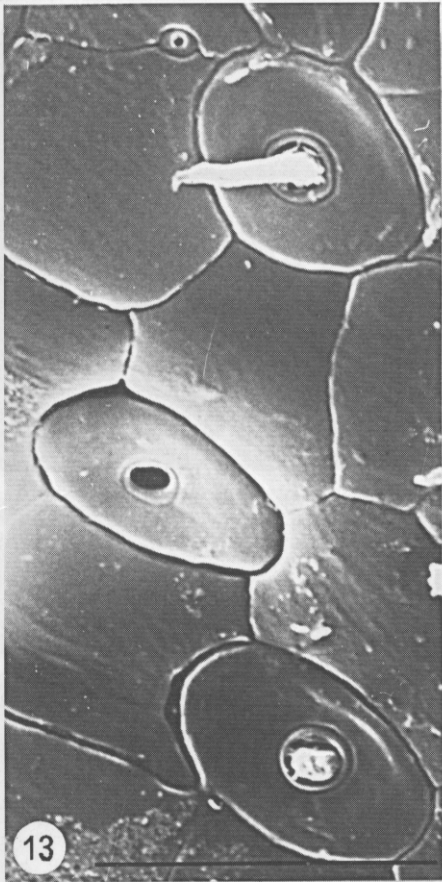
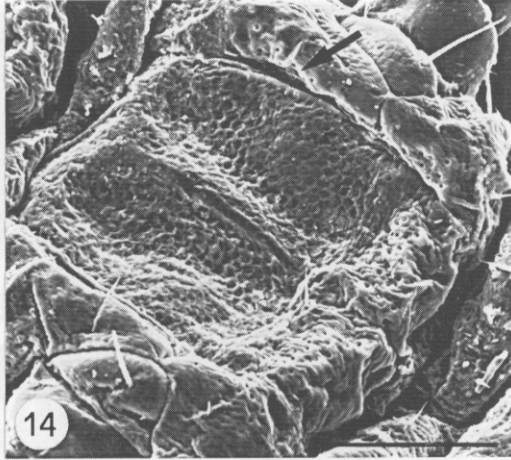
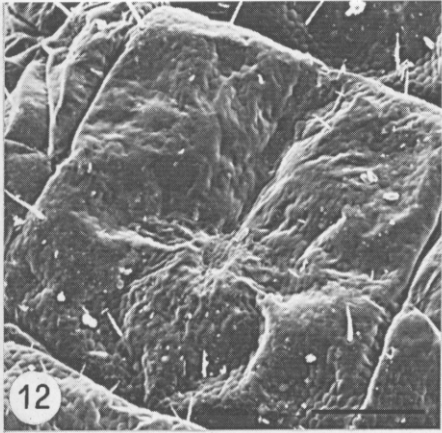
Different again, and very characteristic, is the arrangement of the pores in *Himantarium gabrielis* (Fig. 3), where each pore is surrounded by a rosette of



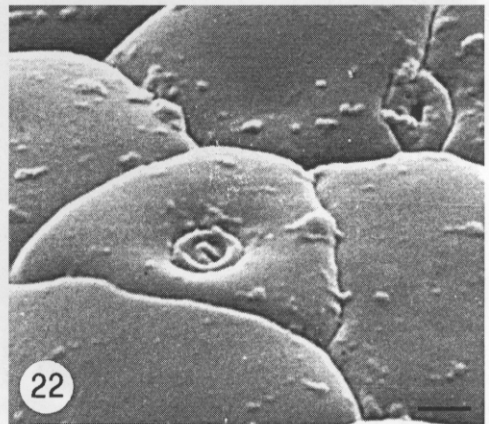
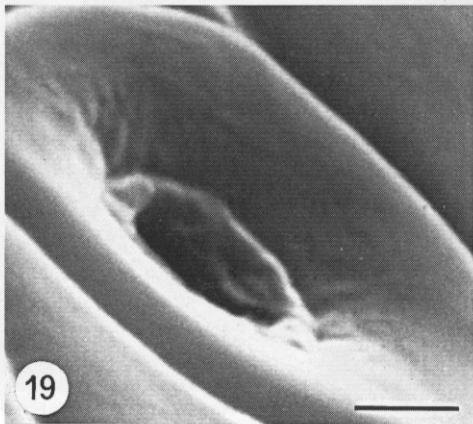
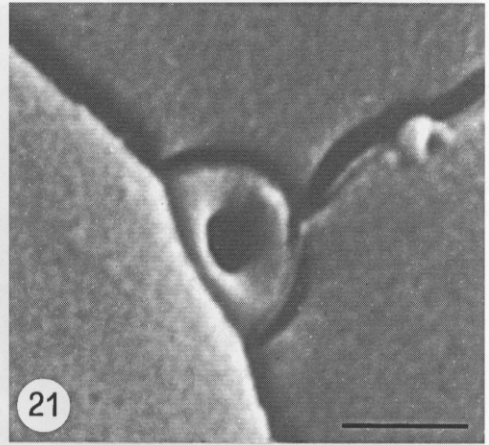
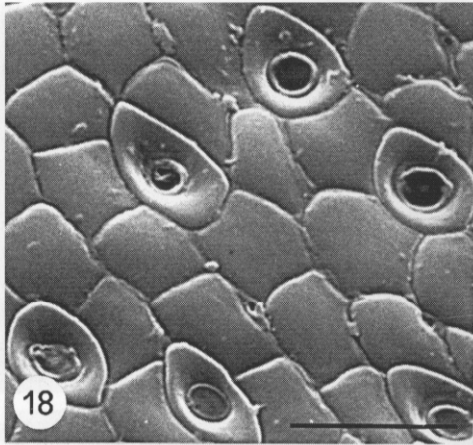
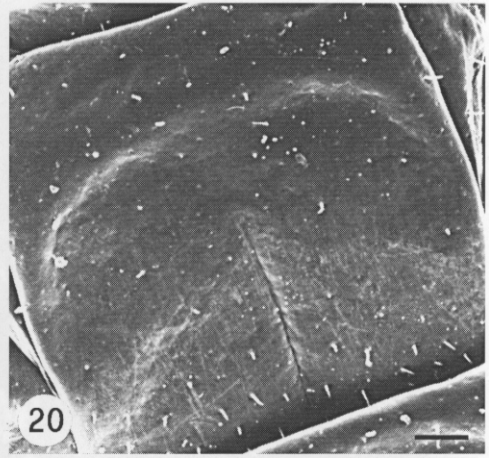
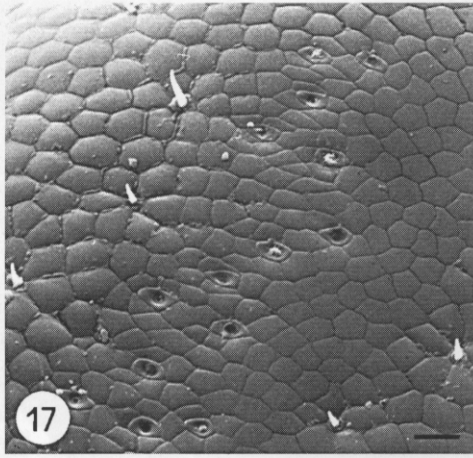
Figures 1-6. Figs 1-3. *Himantarium gabrielis* (Linnaeus) (from Sicily: Foresta di Malabotta): 1, ventral pore area of the second leg-bearing segment: the pore field is depressed and linked to the anterior edge of the segment by a narrow groove; the first leg-bearing segment (right top corner of the picture) only bears a longitudinal groove, without a pore field; 2, pore areas of some posterior segments, all without anterior groove; 3, enlarged detail of a part of a ventral pore area. Figs 4-6. *Henia bicarinata* (Meinert) (from Italy: Gubbio): 4, ventral pore area of the fourth leg-bearing segment; 5 and 6, enlarged details of the same. The arrow points to the suture in the ring surrounding the pore. Scale bar = 100  $\mu\text{m}$  (1 and 2); = 10  $\mu\text{m}$  (3 and 4); = 1  $\mu\text{m}$  (5 and 6).



Figures 7-11. Figs 7-9. *Orya barbarica* (Gervais) (from Algeria: 32 km E from Azarga): 7, ventral pore area of a segment at mid-body level; 8 and 9, enlarged details of the same. Figs 10, 11. *Ballophilus* sp. (from the Virgin Islands); 10, ventral pore area of VI segment; 11, enlarged detail of the same. Scale bar = 100  $\mu\text{m}$  (7); = 10  $\mu\text{m}$  (8 and 10); = 1  $\mu\text{m}$  (9 and 11).

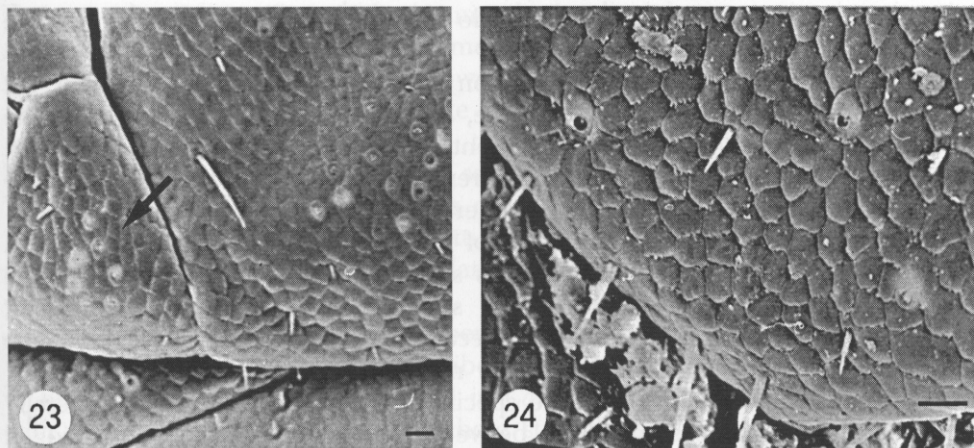


Figures 12–16. Figs 12, 13. *Schendyla carniolensis* Verhoeff (from Italy: Varazze): 12, ventral pore area of the XIV segment; 13 enlarged detail of the same. Figs 14–16. *Strigamia crassipes* (C. L. Koch) (from Croatia: Biokovo): 14, ventral view of the IV leg-bearing segment: the pores are distributed along the posterior edge of the sternite (enlarged detail in Fig. 16) as well as on the hypocoxae (arrow: enlarged detail in Fig. 15). Scale bar = 100  $\mu\text{m}$  (12 and 14); = 10  $\mu\text{m}$  (13, 15 and 16).



Figures 17–22. Figs 17–19. *Clinopodes flavidus* C. L. Koch (from Sicily: Cesarò): 17, ventral pore area of the IV leg-bearing segment; 18, detail of the ventral pore area of the fourth-last segment; 19, a pore. Figs 20, 21. *Dicelophylus carniolensis* (from Italy: Dolomites, Val Cadino): 20, ventral view of a leg-bearing segment, devoid of pore areas; 21 enlarged view of a micropore. Fig. 22. *Geophilus richardi* Brölemann (from Italy: Badalucco), an isolated pore and a micropore of the IV leg-bearing segment. Scale bar = 10  $\mu\text{m}$  (17 and 18); = 1  $\mu\text{m}$  (19, 21 and 22); = 100  $\mu\text{m}$  (20).





Figures 23, 24. *Clinopodes flavidus* C. L. Koch (from Sicily: Cesarò): 23, detail of a standard trunk segment with scattered pores on the hypocoxa (arrow); 24, the sternite of the last leg-bearing segment, also with pores. Scale bar = 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

5–6 cells. At least 5 to 6 poreless cells lay between neighbouring pores, which are about 10  $\mu\text{m}$  apart.

In *Ballophilus* (Fig. 11), the sparsely arranged pores are nearly as crowded as in *Henia*, despite the different nature of the rings. Pore-to-pore distance is about 5–6  $\mu\text{m}$ .

In all geophilomorph species we have studied by SEM, some smaller pores, less than 0.5  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter, also occur on the sternites. These micropores are not bounded by a cuticular ring, but instead open in the middle of a very small cell. These micropores occur within the pore area as well as outside it and also occur in species lacking SPAs. In *Dicellyphilus carniolensis* (Figs 20, 21) only these micropores are present on the sternites, whereas in *Geophilus richardi* (Fig. 22), where typical ventral pores of 2–4  $\mu\text{m}$  are absent, the sternites bear a small number of pores of 0.5–1  $\mu\text{m}$ , similar to the usual ventral pores, in that they are bounded by their own cuticular ring. Small pores of similar size and shape also occur on the hypocoxa of *Strigamia* (Fig. 15).

The micropores have nothing to do with ventral glands, whereas the small pores of *G. richardi* are possibly the remnants of typical ventral pores, their reduction being perhaps a correlate of overall miniaturization (Hanken & Wake, 1993).

The presence of the hypocoxa of pores of the same kind as those of the SPAs is very seldom described, but probably widespread. We provide an illustration (Fig. 23) of hypocoxal pores in *Clinopodes*, which were previously unknown in this genus.

#### *Morphology of pore areas*

Out of 949 geophilomorph species included in our survey, 485 possess SPAs and 302 lack them. For the remaining 162 species, very poor descriptions in the literature prevent safe assignment. In so far as the generic placement of these species is correct, we may guess that they belong mainly

to groups with SPAs. However, we do not refer to them further in the following discussion.

As a rule, SPAs are more evident on the anterior sternites, the first 1-2 (-3) excepted, and, to a lesser degree, on the penultimate sternites. The sternite of the last leg-bearing segment is always described as poreless. However, we found a few scattered pores in *Clinopodes flavidus* (Fig. 24); we also expect a similar occurrence in other species.

We can distinguish two main kinds of SPA segmental pattern (SPASP). In the first, SPAs occur as a homogeneous series along the whole length of the trunk, without any major variation in shape. In the second arrangement, SPAs form an heterogeneous series, because of major differences in shape along the body length; several sternites may also lack SPAs.

The SPASP displayed by a single specimen is often complex but generally 'smooth,' the differences in shape between contiguous SPAs being bridged by fairly continuous transitions.

The SPASPs we recognize are summarized in Table 1. For key references see the Appendix. The shapes of different SPAs recorded for each family and the pattern of transition between SPAs in the heterogeneous series are summarized in Figure 25.

#### *The segmental pattern of sternal pore areas: a taxonomic survey*

##### Himantariidae

SPAs are generally arranged in homogeneous series. In most species SPAs occur from the second sternite to the penultimate one. The individual areas are slightly depressed with respect to the sternal surface, have well-defined outlines and circular, oval or kidney-like shape.

In a few species, the series is more or less heterogeneous: in *Mesocanthus latisternus* Attems, 1934, for example, the areas are ovally elongated on the first segments, circular in the following ones and transversally oval in the rear part of the body. *Himantarium gabrielis* shows individual variability in SPASPs: generally, SPAs are circular in the midbody segments but towards the ends of the trunk they are often oval, with either transversal or longitudinal main axes (Minelli, Pasqual & Etonti, 1984).

In a few species, the series is abruptly truncated at about two thirds body length. The site of the transition (given as the ratio of the average pediferous segment number with the last SPA to the average total number of pediferous segments) is 66/165 in *Nesoporogaster excavata* Verhoeff, 1924; 45/103 in *N. souletina* (Brölemann, 1907), 41/93 (males) or 49/99 (females) in *N. s. brevior* Eason, 1962; 72/163 in *N. hispanica* Matic & Darabantu, 1979 and 50/115 in *N. mediterranea* Matic & Darabantu, 1979; 36/73 in *Stenophilus rothi* Chamberlin, 1953, 50/85 in *Stigmatogaster subterranea* (Leach, 1817) and 60/125 in *S. dimidiata* (Meinert, 1870). This means that this site is roughly the same for several of these species. In fact, dealing with serial homology leads one to discuss whether there is any meaning in *specifically* homologizing the *n*th segment of the body (or trunk), or the *n*th copy of a metamerous feature, say, the *n*th pair of legs or the SPA of the *n*th trunk segment in one animal with the *n*th segment, or feature, of another animal. Our answer is that these features are positionally homologous in a strict sense if and only if

their position is specified, in both animals, in absolute terms, i.e. by counting units (segments, or a proxy for segments) starting with the same (reasonably, the anterior) end of the body. However, position is very often determined in relative rather than in absolute terms. This implies that the features occurring at the  $n$ th segment of two animals are, in a broader sense, homologous, if the total number of segments in the two animals is the same. If, on the contrary, the two animals differ in their total number of segments, then it seems to be appropriate to regard as positional homologues two features occurring at the same relative position even though they are on different segments (Minelli, 1992).

*Meinertophilus californicus* Chamberlin, 1930 and *Stenophilus coloradanus* Chamberlin, 1946 have been described as poreless, but this condition needs to be confirmed. Still more unusual is *Causerium tuxtlanum* Chamberlin, 1964 with pores distributed across the whole sternal surface.

#### Dignathodontidae

In *Henia*, SPAs are distributed in homogeneous series, generally from the first or second to the penultimate sternite. Areas are always well defined and generally depressed and circular, sometimes elongated in longitudinal or transversal sense. This agrees with a possible kinship between this family and the Himantariidae.

No SPA occurs in the other two genera of the family: *Dignathodon* and *Agnathodon*.

#### Oryidae

All the different SPAs occurring in this family are easily understood as different degrees of expressions of a square pattern. The square can be reduced to two transversal rows or even to a single transversal band just in front of the hind border of the sternite. Generally, but not always, SPASPs are of the homogeneous type. In *Metaxythus austrinus* Crabill, 1968, SPAs disappear at about half way along the trunk. Two genera, *Keporya* and *Rhysonotum*, lack SPAs.

In *Trematorya sternalis* Brölemann, 1909 numerous pores are sparsely distributed over the whole surface of the sternite; this arrangement is unusual within Oryidae and seems to justify the usual placement of this genus in a distinct family-level taxon, Trematoryinae.

#### Eriphantidae

In the single species belonging to this family, *Eriphantes telluris* Crabill, 1970, the SPASP is a heterogeneous series from the very first segment to the penultimate one.

#### Gonibregmatidae

Most SPAs can be regarded as different modifications of a square pattern. The basic pattern, however, seems to be richer than in Oryidae, because of the development of a longitudinal median stripe. SPASPs are generally of the homogeneous type. *Eucratonyx meinerti* (Pocock, 1889), *Eu. hamatus* Pocock, 1898 and *Himantosoma porosum* Pocock, 1891 have heterogeneous SPASPs.

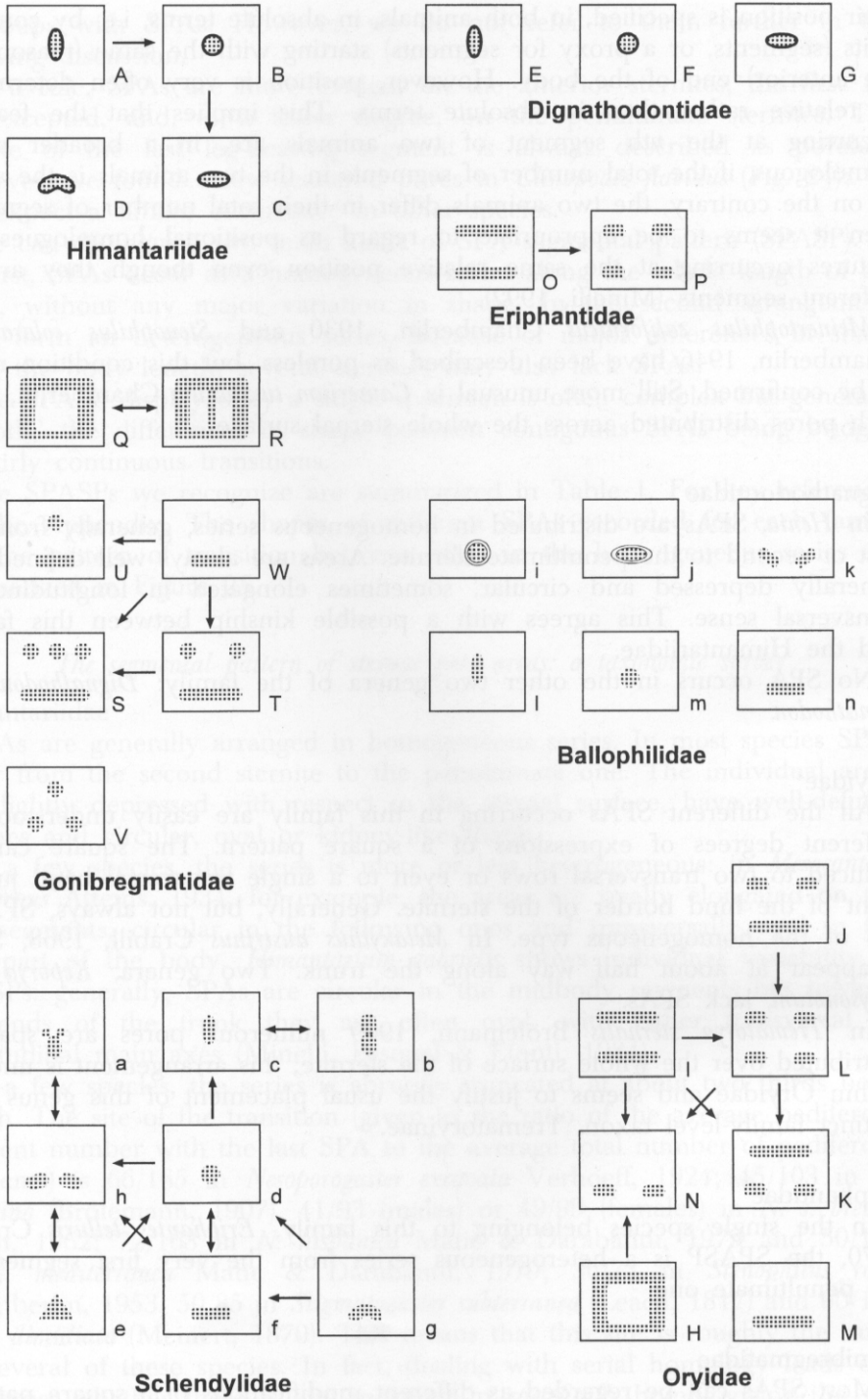
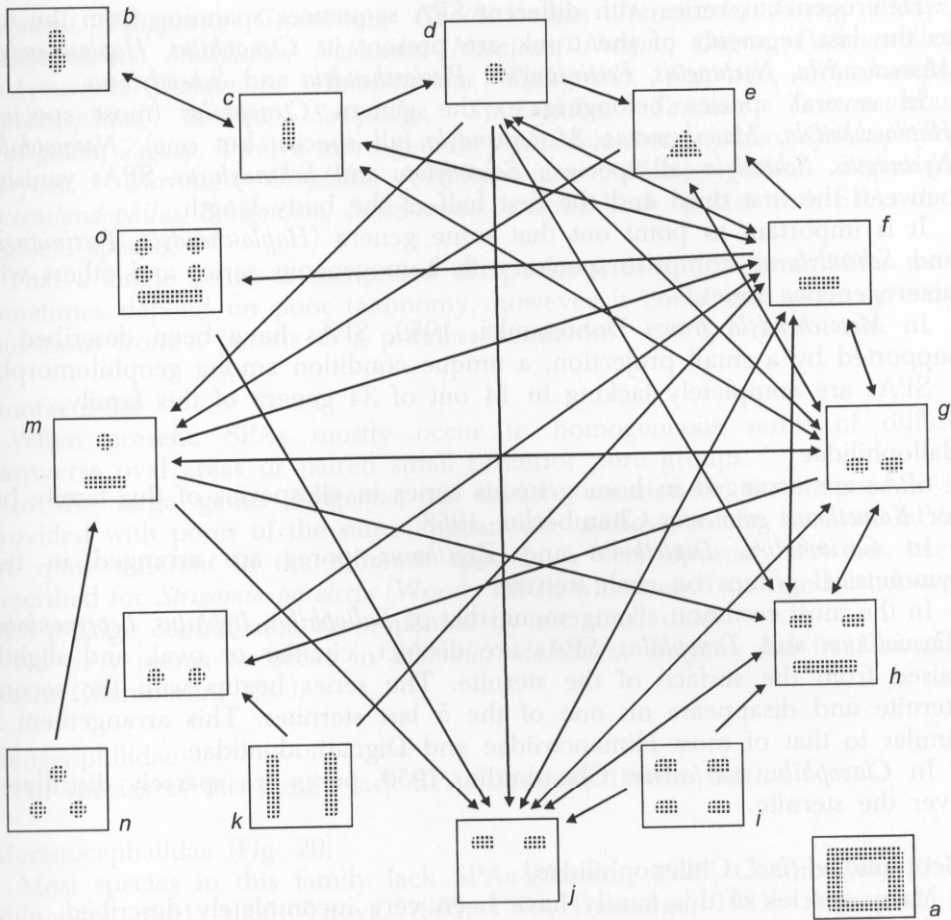
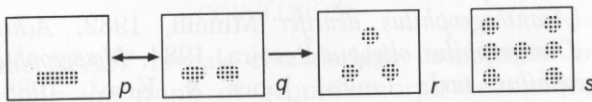


Figure 25. A schematic summary of the kinds of sternal pore areas (SPAs) occurring in the individual families of geophilomorph centipedes. Couples of SPAs occurring together in the same animal are connected by a line. Arrows indicate the antero-posterior polarity, i.e. which one of the SPAs precedes the other along the trunk. Codes for SPAs are the same as in Table 1.



**Geophilidae**



**Linotaeniidae**

Figure 25.—continued.

No SPA has been described for *Gonibregmatus cumingii* Newport, 1842, *Eremorus becki* Chamberlin, 1963 and *Ketampa brattstromi* Chamberlin, 1956.

**Schendylidae**

Only a few species belonging to the genera *Ctenophilus*, *Lithoschendyla*, *Nyctunguis*, *Schendylellus* and *Schendylurus* have homogeneous SPASP beginning with the first or second sternite.

Heterogeneous series with different SPA sequences spanning from the first to the last segments of the trunk are present in *Ctenophilus*, *Haploschendyla*, *Mesoschendyla*, *Nyctunguis*, *Pectiniunguis*, *Plesioschendyla* and *Schendylurus*.

In several species belonging to the genera *Ctenophilus* (most species), *Haploschendyla*, *Marsikomerus*, *Mesoschendyla* (all species but one), *Nannophilus*, *Nyctunguis*, *Schendyla* (all species), *Schendylops* and *Schendylurus*, SPAs vanishes between the first third and the first half of the body length.

It is important to point out that some genera (*Haploschendyla*, *Pectiniunguis* and *Schendylurus*) comprise species with homogeneous series and others with heterogeneous series.

In *Mesoschendyla franzi* Dobrorouka, 1959, SPAs have been described as supported by a small projection, a unique condition among geophilomorphs.

SPAs are completely lacking in 14 out of 34 genera of this family.

### Ballophilidae

SPAs are arranged in homogeneous series in all species of this family but for *Koinethmus guanereus* Chamberlin, 1958.

In *Caritohallex*, *Diplethmus* and *Zygethmus*, pores are arranged in two symmetrical groups on each sternite.

In the most common arrangement, that of *Ballophilus*, *Ityphilus*, *Leptynophilus*, *Taeniolinum* and *Tanophilus*, SPAs are distinct, circular or oval, and slightly raised from the surface of the sternite. The series begins with the second sternite and disappears on one of the 5 last sternites. This arrangement is similar to that of most Himantariidae and Dignathodontidae.

In *Clavophilus maricaonus* Chamberlin, 1950, pores are sparsely distributed over the sternite.

### Geophilidae (incl. Chilenophilidae)

Many species of this family have been very incompletely described.

Few species with homogeneous SPASP occur in different genera of this family, as in one or more species of *Andenophilus*, *Chalandea*, *Clinopodes*, *Geophilus*, *Pleurogeophilus*, *Polygonarea*, *Ribautia*, *Turkophilus*, *Zelanophilus*.

Most geophilids have heterogeneous SPASPs and exhibit a very large number of SPAs' shapes and sequences.

Sometimes (*Acanthogeophilus dentifer* Minelli, 1982, *Achilophilus monoporus* Attems, 1928, *Dinogeophilus oligopus* Pereira, 1984, *Mesogeophilus kapiti* (Archev, 1922), *Nothogeophilus turki* Lewis, Jones & Keay, 1988, *Sogona kerrana* Chamberlin, 1940, *Timpina texana* Chamberlin, 1912, some species of *Eurytion*, *Geophilus*, *Ribautia*, *Schizoribautia*), SPAs are present in the first segments of the trunk and then vanish, generally between the first third and the first half of the body. In *Arctogeophilus sachalinus* Verhoeff, 1934 and *Dinogeophilus pauropus* Silvestri, 1909 SPAs disappear before the first quarter of the trunk.

In two species of genus *Aphilodon* and in *Geophilus bosniensis* Verhoeff, 1895 SPAs occur in the last trunk segments only.

Sparse pores evenly distributed across the whole sternal surface have been described in *Achilophilus pachypus* Verhoeff, 1937, *Arctogeophilus macrocephalus* Folkmanova & Dobrorouka, 1960 and *Queenslandophilus goetschi* Verhoeff, 1934.

One third of geophilid genera lack SPAs. These are *Alloschizotaenia*, *Barrophilus*, *Bebekium*, *Brachygeophilus*, *Brachygonarea*, *Cephalodolichus*, *Condylona*,

*Dysmesus*, *Filipponus*, *Geomerinus*, *Gnathoribautia*, *Harmostela*, *Idiona*, *Lionyx*, *Mecistauchenus*, *Mecophilus*, *Nabocodes*, *Navajona*, *Nicopus*, *Oligna*, *Pachymerellus*, *Pachymerinus*, *Pandinium*, *Philacroterium*, *Philogeonus*, *Poaphilus*, *Schizonampa*, *Sepedonophilus*, *Serrona*, *Soniphilus*, *Synthophilus*, *Taiyuna*, *Tasmanophilus*, *Watophilus*, *Zygona*. Twelve more genera (*Aphilodon*, *Arctogeophilus*, *Chilenophilus*, *Eurytion*, *Garrina*, *Geophilus*, *Pachymerium*, *Pleurogeophilus*, *Polycricus*, *Queenslandophilus*, *Schizonium*, *Schizotaenia*) include both species with SPAs and poreless species.

That a single genus is comprised of species with and without SPAs may sometimes depend on poor taxonomy, however it could also point to easy transitions from a porous to a poreless condition.

#### Linotaeniidae

When present, SPAs mostly occur in homogeneous series of diffuse transverse oval areas or paired small posterior pore groups.

In the large genus *Strigamia*, as already mentioned, the hypocoaxa is provided with pores of the same appearance as those on the sternites. SPAs are quite different in the different species. A very unusual SPA has been described for *Strigamia parviceps* (Wood, 1862), where each sternite is endowed with a large central area accompanied by six small ones.

No SPA seems to occur in *Horonia*, *Malochora*, *Korynia* and in *Damothus montis* Chamberlin, 1960.

#### Neogeophilidae

All species of this family lack SPAs (Crabill, 1961b; 1969c).

#### Mecistocephalidae (Fig. 20)

Most species in this family lack SPAs (Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1959; Shinohara, 1961, 1965; Titova, 1965, 1975; Demange, 1981). According to Crabill (1968a), the species of the genus *Tygarrup* are sexually dimorphic, with SPAs in males only (described as separate genus *Brahmaputrus* by Verhoeff, 1942b).

### CONCLUSIONS

The study of the SPASP reveals considerable complexity (in the sense of McShea, 1993) along the trunk of geophilomorph centipedes. This feature contrasts with the apparently uniform trunk structure of these arthropods, and is perhaps a bit unexpected in a group with strictly epimorphic development.

We have tried to explain the different kinds of SPAs as more or less divergent expressions of a common ground-plan. This approach is similar to the traditional (comparative, not experimental) approach to the study of butterfly wing patterns (reviewed in Nijhout, 1991). The argument develops as follows.

First, within one individual, the SPASP is, according to the species, either homogeneous or heterogeneous. Therefore, it seems to be safe to regard as 'related'—i.e. as different expressions of a common ground-type—the different kinds of SPAs which occur within one animal with heterogeneous SPASP.

Second, one type of SPA may be associated with different types of SPA in different species. Therefore, in some way, we can also regard as 'related' two SPAs which may both associate with a third SPA, although they never occur together in the same animal.

Actually, in the graphs of co-occurrence of SPAs in the different families (Fig. 25) there are many links. In Eriphantidae and Schendylidae, all SPAs recorded appear to be 'related.' In four more families, only one SPA remains out of the connected network. Only in Gonibregmatidae does the connectivity graph show three separate clusters of SPAs. This, however, may be due to the very low number of species described in the family or to the possible polyphyly of this unrevised group.

Within the individual families, the patterns summarized in Figure 25 support the hypothesis that the most different SPAs are but variations on a common theme, that is to say that these structures are transformational homologues. Obviously, we cannot apply this approach to the families in which only homogeneous series occur (Dignathodontidae and Ballophilidae).

Sternal pores are, possibly, an autapomorphy of Geophilomorpha. Therefore, the widespread (and scattered) poreless condition should be regarded as a derived homoplastic state. A little puzzling, however, is the situation in the Mecistocephalidae. There is a possibility that Mecistocephalidae are the sister-group to all remaining Geophilomorpha. Verhoeff (1902-25) contrasted them as superfamily Placodesmata to a superfamily Adesmata with all remaining geophilomorphs. In that case, the poreless condition would be ancestral to the whole of Geophilomorpha, thus retained by Mecistocephalidae as a plesiomorphy.

The occurrence of scattered pores in some representatives of Himantariidae, Ballophilidae and Geophilidae, is certainly homoplastic.

At the present stage of knowledge we have not attempted comparisons between genera not belonging to the same family. This means that we do not feel confident in the degree of generalization our comparative approach may warrant. The same happened, in the past, when considering the wing patterns of Lepidoptera. At present, we simply lack more detailed knowledge of geophilomorph SPAs as well as a reliable phylogenetic arrangement of genera and suprageneric taxa.

Priorities for further research on geophilomorph sternal pores include:

- (1) An adequate re-description of a large fraction of the named species. Recent revisionary work on several genera (e.g. Minelli 1982b; Hoffman & Pereira, 1991; Pereira & Demange, 1991) has abundantly demonstrated that many old descriptions, even among those of famous (and prolific) authors like Silvestri and Verhoeff, were often wrong, owing to inadequate clearing of the specimens, poor optics, careless observation, bad typesetting, lack of proof reading, or a mixture of these different causes;
- (2) A study of the developmental series. Routine examination of large series, likely including all post-embryonic stages of a few common species, does not reveal any major ontogenetic change in shape and distribution of pore areas, but a systematic investigation has not yet been performed;
- (3) An adequate study of intraspecific variability, especially in the himantariid species with abruptly truncated SPASP;



- (4) A more sensible specification of the position of the individual pore area on the sternal surface. To simply qualify a transversal bar, or a couple of spots, as 'anterior' or 'posterior' is but a first approximation, to be refined by taking into account either metric parameters or, perhaps better, the association of 'normal,' glandular and accompanying 'cells.'

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## APPENDIX

Papers containing useful descriptions of sternal pore areas in the genera quoted in the text.

- Himantariidae  
*Causerium* Chamberlin, 1964  
*Himantarium* Attems, 1929  
*Meinertophilus* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1930a; Verhoeff, 1938d  
*Mesocanthus* Attems, 1929, 1934a, 1947  
*Nesopovrogaster* Attems, 1929; Eason, 1962; Matic & Darabantu, 1969  
*Stenophilus* Chamberlin, 1946c, 1953b  
*Stigmatogaster* Attems, 1929; Verhoeff, 1938c
- Dignathodontidae  
*Agnathodon* Folkmanova & Dobroruka, 1960  
*Dignathodon* Attems, 1929  
*Henia* Attems, 1929; Minelli, 1982b
- Oryidae  
*Ķeporya* Chamberlin, 1941b  
*Metaxythus* Crabill, 1968b  
*Rhysonotum* Attems, 1952b  
*Trematorya* Attems, 1929
- Eriphantidae  
*Eriphantes* Crabill, 1970
- Gonibregmatidae  
*Eremorus* Chamberlin, 1963  
*Eucratonyx* Attems, 1929  
*Gonibregmatus* Attems, 1929, 1930b  
*Himantosoma* Attems, 1929  
*Ketampa* Chamberlin, 1955-56
- Schendylidae  
*Ctenophilus* Pereira & Demange, 1991  
*Haploschendyla* Attems, 1929; Lawrence, 1960  
*Litoschendyla* Attems, 1929  
*Marsicomerus* Hoffman & Pereira, 1991  
*Mesoschendyla* Attems, 1929; Crabill, 1968a; Verhoeff, 1937a, 1940; Dobroruka, 1959  
*Nannophilus* Attems, 1929  
*Nyctunguis* Attems, 1929, 1939; Crabill, 1958; Chamberlin, 1941a, 1946d, 1962b; Turk, 1955  
*Pectiniunguis* Attems, 1929; Crabill, 1959b; Chamberlin, 1941a; Pereira & Coscarón, 1975-76  
*Plesioschendyla* Attems, 1929  
*Schendyla* Attems, 1929; Kaczmarek, 1962, 1969, Verhoeff, 1934a  
*Schendylellus* Attems, 1929  
*Schendylops* Attems, 1929  
*Schendylurus* Attems, 1929, 1934a; Chamberlin, 1957; Crabill, 1960a; Demange, 1963; Pereira, 1981b, 1984a; Turk, 1955
- Ballophilidae  
*Ballophilus* Archey, 1936; Attems, 1929, 1953; Chamberlin, 1944a, 1950b, 1953a; Demange, 1963; Lawrence, 1960; Verhoeff, 1939a, 1951  
*Caritohallex* Crabill, 1960  
*Clavophilus* Chamberlin, 1950b  
*Diplethmus* Attems, 1929, 1947; Chamberlin, 1940a; Turk, 1955  
*Ityphilus* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1943a, 1943b, 1957; Crabill, 1960a  
*Koinethmus* Chamberlin 1958  
*Leptynophilus* Chamberlin, 1940a  
*Taeniolinum* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1940a  
*Tanophilus* Attems, 1929  
*Zygethmus* Chamberlin, 1957

## Geophilidae (inc. Chilenophilidae)

- Acanthogeophilus* Minelli, 1982a  
*Achilophilus* Attems, 1929, Verhoeff, 1937a  
*Alloschizotaenia* Attems, 1929, 1937  
*Andenophilus* Verhoeff, 1951  
*Aphilodon* Attems, 1929; Lawrence, 1955; Verhoeff, 1937a, 1938a  
*Arctogeophilus* Attems, 1929, 1947; Chamberlin, 1941a; Folkmanova & Dobroruka, 1960; Verhoeff, 1934a  
*Barrophilus* Chamberlin, 1940a  
*Bebekium* Verhoeff, 1945  
*Brachygeophilus* Attems, 1929, 1934a, 1952b; Chamberlin, 1938, 1941a, 1943a, 1952a, 1953b; Crabill, 1949; Folkmanova, 1956  
*Brachygonarea* Attems, 1929, 1934a  
*Cephalodolichus* Verhoeff, 1938a  
*Chalanda* Attems, 1929, 1952a  
*Chilenophilus* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1962a  
*Chilerium* Chamberlin, 1955-56  
*Clinopodes* Attems, 1929; Loksa, 1971  
*Condylona* Chamberlin, 1941a  
*Dinogeophilus* Attems, 1929; Pereira, 1984c  
*Dysmesus* Chamberlin, 1944b  
*Eurytion* Attems, 1929; Dobroruka, 1969; Verhoeff, 1937a, 1940  
*Filipponus* Chamberlin, 1962a  
*Garrina* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1943a, 1943b, 1944b  
*Geomerinus* Attems, 1929  
*Geophilus* Archey, 1936; Attems, 1929, 1951, 1952b; Chamberlin, 1928a, 1928b, 1930b, 1940b, 1941a, 1943b, 1951; Folkmanova, 1928; Kaczmarek, 1970; Minelli, 1983; Silvestri, 1935b; Verhoeff, 1928, 1939a, 1943b  
*Gnathoribautia* Attems, 1929  
*Harmostela* Chamberlin, 1941a  
*Idiona* Chamberlin, 1946a  
*Lionix* Chamberlin, 1960b; Pereira & Hoffman, 1993  
*Mecistauchenus* Attems, 1929  
*Mecophilus* Attems, 1929  
*Mesogeophilus* Attems, 1929, 1947  
*Nabocodes* Chamberlin, 1940a  
*Navajona* Chamberlin, 1930b  
*Nicopus* Attems, 1947  
*Nothogeophilus* Lewis, Jones & Keay, 1988  
*Oigna* Chamberlin, 1943a  
*Pachymerellus* Attems, 1929  
*Pachymerinus* Attems, 1929  
*Pachymerium* Attems, 1929, 1934b, 1947; Capuse, 1968; Chamberlin, 1960a; Lawrence, 1960; Matic, Negrea & Fundora Martinez, 1977; Verhoeff, 1943  
*Pandinium* Chamberlin, 1955-56, 1956, 1962a  
*Philacroterium* Attems, 1929  
*Philogeonus* Attems, 1929  
*Pleurogeophilus* Attems, 1929, 1947; Folkmanova, 1956; Verhoeff, 1934a  
*Poaphilus* Attems, 1929  
*Polyricus* Chamberlin, 1940a, 1941d, 1943a, 1944b  
*Polygonarea* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1955-56; Lawrence, 1959; Verhoeff, 1937a, 1938a, 1941b, 1942a  
*Queenslandophilus* Attems, 1929; Verhoeff, 1934a  
*Ribautia* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1941b, 1957; Demange, 1963; Lawrence, 1960; Verhoeff, 1939b  
*Schizonampa* Attems, 1929  
*Schizonium* Chamberlin, 1955-56, 1962a  
*Schizoribautia* Chamberlin, 1957; Verhoeff, 1951  
*Schizotaenia* Attems, 1929; Dobroruka, 1969, 1973; Folkmanova & Dobroruka, 1960  
*Sepedonophilus* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1940c  
*Serrona* Chamberlin, 1941a  
*Sogona* Attems, 1929, 1947; Chamberlin, 1940d, 1943a  
*Soniphilus* Attems, 1929



- Synthophilus* Chamberlin, 1946b  
*Taiyuna* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1941a  
*Tasmanophilus* Attems, 1929  
*Timpina* Attems, 1929  
*Turkophilus* Verhoeff, 1941a  
*Watophilus* Attems, 1929; Chamberlin, 1928b  
*Zelanophilus* Archey, 1936; Crabill, 1963  
*Zygonia* Chamberlin, 1960a; Pereira & Hoffman, 1993
- Linotaeniidae  
*Damothus* Chamberlin, 1960a; Crabill, 1962b  
*Horonia* Chamberlin, 1966  
*Korynia* Chamberlin, 1941a, 1954  
*Malochora* Chamberlin, 1941a  
*Strigamia* Attems, 1929; Shinohara, 1981; Verhoeff, 1935, 1938b