





UDC: 595.44(477)

RECORDS OF *PARDOSA SALTANS* TÖPFER-HOFMANN, 2000 (ARANEAE, LYCOSIDAE) IN UKRAINE

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Hirna, A., & Lopatka, O. (2025). Records of *Pardosa saltans* Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000 (Araneae, Lycosidae) in Ukraine. *Studia Biologica*, 19(4), 157–166. doi:[10.30970/sbi.1904.848](https://doi.org/10.30970/sbi.1904.848)

Background. The paper addresses the challenge of distinguishing two morphologically similar species of the *Pardosa lugubris* species group, namely *Pardosa lugubris* (Walckenaer, 1802) and *Pardosa saltans* Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000. To date, *P. saltans* has not been included in any published summarized lists of spiders in Ukraine. However, it can be assumed that the range encompasses the country because it extends across Europe, from Spain and Ireland to Southern European Russia and Georgia. Consequently, a revision of the collections was conducted with two objectives: confirming *P. saltans* distribution in Ukraine and verifying the accuracy of identifications of *P. lugubris*, one of the most abundant species in the family Lycosidae.

Materials and Methods. The revision was based on materials collected between 1999 and 2024 from six administrative regions in the western territories of Ukraine and covers such physiographic regions as Volhynian and Male Polissia, Roztochia and the Volhynian-Podolian Uplands, the Eastern Carpathian Foothills, and the Carpathians. Isolated male palps and dissected cleared epigyne/vulvae were examined. Species identification was conducted using appropriate descriptions and keys.

Results. The taxonomic revision confirmed the correct identification of *P. lugubris* in most localities across six regions (oblasts) in the west of Ukraine. The first records of *P. saltans* from Volyn, Lviv, and Rivne oblasts have been documented. These are also the species' first confirmed records within Volhynian Polissia and the Volhynian-Podolian Uplands. Photographs of the spiders' body parts displaying the diagnostic features of the species were provided. Verified localities for *P. lugubris* and *P. saltans* were plotted on a map.



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Conclusion. Given the occurrence of *P. saltans* in different regions of Ukraine and its locally high population densities, the results of this study confirm the need to review collection materials of *Pardosa lugubris* (s. lato) to isolate individuals of *P. saltans* and ensure the differentiation of the two species during the initial processing of samples from the country.

Keywords: spiders, *Pardosa lugubris* species-group, localities, biodiversity, western territories of Ukraine

INTRODUCTION

The wolf spider genus *Pardosa* C. L. Koch, 1848, is distributed almost world-wide and includes 529 species, with at least 85 species and 9 subspecies occurring in Europe (WSC, 2025; Nentwig *et al.*, 2025). According to the configuration of their copulatory organs, species of this genus are divided into at least 34 taxonomic species groups (Wang & Zhang, 2014). This informal classification is of practical importance, as it facilitates the identification of so-called cryptic (morphologically similar or nearly identical) taxa.

Pardosa saltans Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000, along with five morphologically similar species, namely *P. alacris* (C. L. Koch, 1833), *P. baehrorum* Kronestedt, 1999, *P. caucasica* Ovtsharenko, 1979, *P. lugubris* (Walckenaer, 1802), and *P. pertinax* von Helversen, 2000, belong to the *lugubris* group, which was distinguished only in 1990 (Töpfer-Hofmann & von Helversen, 1990; Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000). The ranges of species described in the late 20th century have not been definitively clarified. Therefore, for many European countries, particularly their southeastern and eastern parts, there remains a need to revise the available collection materials of *P. lugubris* (s. lato).

In Ukraine, the identification and differentiation of *P. lugubris* / *P. alacris* and *P. lugubris* / *P. saltans* specimens is particularly relevant, as the ranges of these cryptic species encompass almost all of Europe (with those of *P. alacris* and *P. lugubris* extending to Central Asia). Consequently, faunistic records of one of the most widespread species, *P. lugubris*, cannot be deemed reliable unless the material has been reviewed.

The distinguishing of *P. alacris*, which in 1992 was recognized as the senior synonym of *P. pseudolugubris* Wunderlich, 1984, occurred earlier. Today, we know the distribution and habitat preferences of this species within Ukraine and confirm its coexistence with *P. lugubris* in many localities. The situation with *P. saltans* is different. When this species was described in 2000, the authors noted it “is a widespread species but seems to be restricted to the more western parts of Europe” (Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000: P. 270). Recently, it has been recorded in the Caucasus (in Georgia; Seporian *et al.*, 2023) and mentioned from Southern European Russia (Nentwig *et al.*, 2025). However, this species has still not been included in the summarized lists of spiders for Ukraine, Slovakia, and Hungary (Nentwig *et al.*, 2025).

The other three species of the *lugubris* group have a more local distribution, in particular, *P. caucasica* occurs in the Caucasus, *P. pertinax* – in Greece and Turkey, *P. baehrorum* – in Central Europe and Romania (Weiss & Petrişor, 1999; Nentwig *et al.*, 2025; WSC, 2025). Their records in Ukraine look less realistic.

We first discovered *P. saltans* individuals in the 2023 collection from the National Nature Park “Tsumanska Pushcha” (Volyn oblast). Based on the hypothesis that *P. lugubris* material might also include specimens of other species, we revised all samples

housed at the Institute of Ecology of the Carpathians, which were previously collected in the west of Ukraine. Accordingly, we aimed to confirm or refute the records of *P. saltans* in other regions of Ukraine.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We analyzed the spider specimens from six administrative regions in the west of Ukraine, specifically within Volyn, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, and Zakarpattia oblasts. The study covered areas including Volhynian and Male (Little) Polissia, Roztochia and the Volhynian-Podolian Uplands, the Eastern Carpathian Foothills (Ciscarpathia), and the Carpathians.

Specimens were primarily collected by hand (on the forest floor or in thatch) or using pitfall traps (half-litre glass jars, 75 mm in diameter, buried level with the soil surface and filled one-third with either a 4 % solution of formaldehyde or a 50% solution of acetic acid). The collected material was preserved in 70–80% ethanol isolated male palps and dissected, cleared epigyne/vulvae were examined following maceration in a 10% KOH solution at ambient temperature for 24 h. Specimens were identified using Nentwig *et al.* (2025) and additional publications on the taxonomy of the *Pardosa lugubris* group (Kronestedt, 1992; Töpfer-Hofmann & von Helversen, 1990; Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000). The nomenclature follows the World Spider Catalog (2025). Pictures were captured using a Nikon Coolpix 4500 camera attached to a Zeiss Stemi 2000 stereo microscope.

The distribution map is based solely on the revised material from 46 samples, and not all known localities of *P. lugubris* in the west of Ukraine are depicted. Dates are presented in the format day/month/year.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The revision of the collection materials of *Pardosa lugubris* (s. lato) reveals the presence of two species: *P. lugubris* (Walckenaer, 1802) and *P. saltans* Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000. The latter was found in materials from three out of six regions (in 8 out of 46 localities): Rivne, Lviv, and Volyn, corresponding to the Volhynian and Podolian Uplands within the deciduous forest zone and Volhynian Polissia within the mixed forest zone (**Fig. 1**). From Ukraine, the species was first mentioned in an article by M. Fedoriak, published in Russia in 2014. One individual of *P. saltans* was captured in the Ciscarpathian region of Chernivtsi Oblast in 2012 (vil. Korovia, Kosmin railway station; green diamond in **Fig. 1**). The species was included in the taxonomic list from the study area without specifying the specimen's sex. Because the reliable identification of *P. saltans* is only possible for males (Töpfer-Hofmann & von Helversen, 1990; Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000), these data from Chernivtsi Oblast require clarification or confirmation.

Since female identification is difficult and often impossible, only samples containing males were selected for review.

Material examined:

Lycosidae Sundevall, 1833

Pardosa lugubris (Walckenaer, 1802): **Figs. 2A, 2C, 2E**

Ukraine: **Ivano-Frankivsk** oblast: vil. Berezivka [48.83915N, 24.69661E; 281 m a.s.l.], river bank, willow thickets, coll. by hand, 03/07/2016, 1♂; vil. Bystrytsia

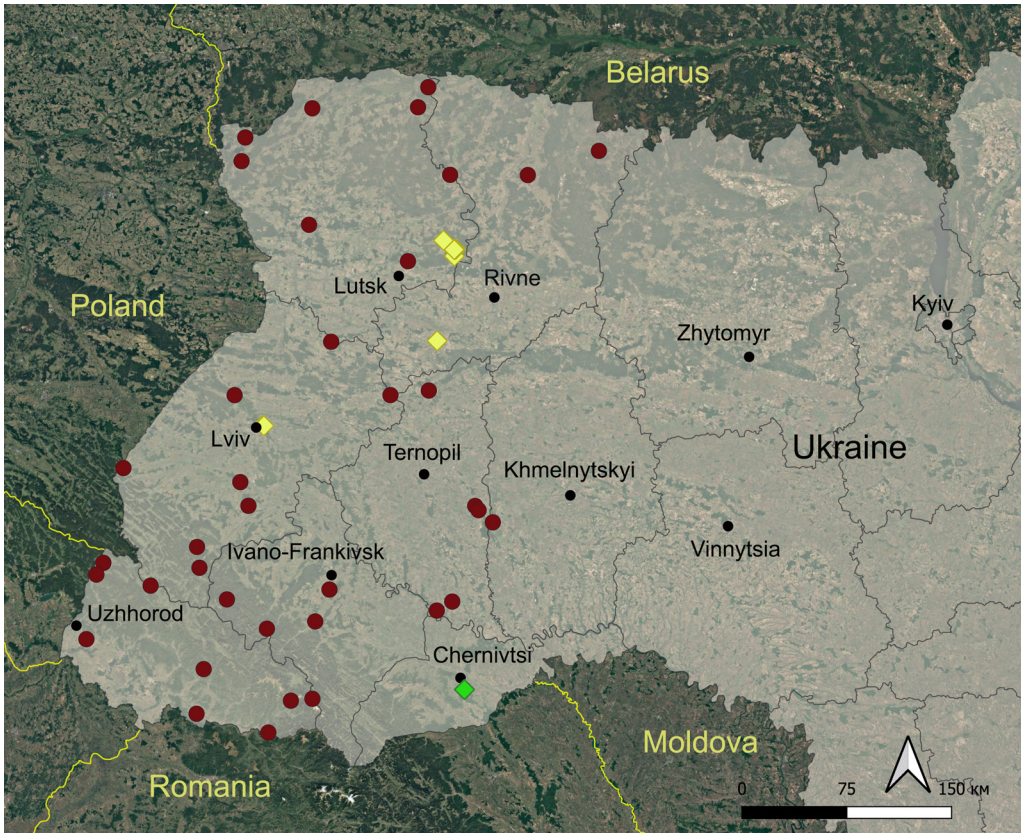


Fig. 1. Distribution of *Pardosa lugubris* (Walckenaer, 1802) and *Pardosa saltans* Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000 in the west of Ukraine. Red circles are the localities of *P. lugubris*, yellow diamonds – *P. lugubris* and *P. saltans*. Green diamond – the locality of *P. saltans* (need confirmation)

[48.42724N, 24.31279E; 985 m a.s.l.], lake shore in the spruce forest, coll. by hand, 10/11/2013, 1♂; vil. Myslivka (Lysak bog) [48.77760N, 23.72558E; 951 m a.s.l.], raised bog, coll. by hand, 05/09/2023, 2♂♂; Nadvirna city [48.64029N, 24.56169E; 416 m a.s.l.], unvegetated gravel river bank, coll. by hand, 20/05/2016, 1♂; Vorokhta [48.15442N, 24.53500E; 1427 m a.s.l.], subalpine grasslands, coll. by hand, 07/09/2023, 2♂♂; vil. Stara Huta (Ihrovets Mt.) [48.59482N, 24.10398E; 1780 m a.s.l.], siliceous screes with patches of [*Pinus mugo*], in pitfall traps, 08/06–03/08/2023, 1♂; **Lviv** oblast: vil. Buchyna [50.03418N, 25.27390E; 322 m a.s.l.], spruce-pine plantation, in pitfall traps, 12/05–24/06/2015, 7♂♂, 3♀♀; Dobromyl [49.58944N, 22.74556E; 441 m a.s.l.], old-growth oak-beech forest, in pitfall traps, 11/05–08/06/2011, 2♂♂; vil. Hrebeniv [48.97444N, 23.46556E; 613 m a.s.l.], spruce plantation, in pitfall traps, 23/05–23/06/2015, 3♂♂; vil. Kolodrubyy [49.50305N, 23.85272E; 252 m a.s.l.], floodplain meadow, coll. by hand, 19/05/2002, 1♂, 1♀; vil. Krekhiv [50.03412N, 23.79852E; 292 m a.s.l.], artificial urban green areas, coll. by hand, 07/06/2008, 2♂♂; vil. Krushelnytsia [49.10358N, 23.44289E; 504 m a.s.l.], heaths with *Calluna vulgaris*, in pitfall traps, 15/05–20/06/2024, 1♂; Lviv, Regional Landscape Park “Znesinnia”, [49.85156N, 24.06768E; 265 m a.s.l.], forest edge of wetlands, in pitfall traps, 02/06–04/07/2023, 8♂♂, [49.84779N, 24.07555E; 283 m a.s.l.] xerothermic forest

edges, in pitfall traps, 02/06–04/07/2023, 1♂; vil. Pyatnychany [49.35720N, 23.92947E; 277 m a.s.l.], ash-oak forest, in pitfall traps, 09/05–09/06/2015, 9♂♂; vil. Stoyaniv [50.3575N, 24.7127 E; 207 m a.s.l.], heathland, in pitfall traps, 02/05–09/07/2023, 18♂♂, 11♀♀; vil. Verkhnie Husne (Pikui Mt.) [48.86329N; 23.00302E; 890 m], old-growth sycamore-beech forest, coll. by hand, 30/06/2023, 1♂; **Rivne** oblast: vil. Bilsk [51.49442N, 27.24785E; 158 m a.s.l.], bog woodland, in pitfall traps, 01/05–01/09/2018, 14♂♂, 9♀♀; Sarny [51.35204, 26.57494; 156 m a.s.l.], artificial urban green areas, coll. by hand, 10/05/2003, 1♂; vil. Tarakaniv [50.363103N, 25.716167E; 228 m a.s.l.], successional vegetation on the fortress remains, 15/06/2023, 2♂♂; vil. Varash [51.35344, 25.83944; 155 m a.s.l.], floodplain of the Styr river, coll. by hand, 03/08/1999, 3♂♂; **Ternopil** oblast, vil. Bilche Zolote [48.764174N, 25.859156E; 164 m a.s.l.], bank of the riv. Seret, coll. by hand, 17/09/2016, 1♂; vil. Dzvyaniach [48.70814, 25.71318; 278 m a.s.l.], roadside, 16/09/2016: 1♂; vil. Kalaharivka [49.25546N, 26.24353E; 254 m a.s.l.], bank of the riv. Zbruch, coll. by hand, 09/08/2021, 3♂♂; vil. Vikno (Hostra hill) [49.35666N, 26.076617E; 335 m a.s.l.], stony steppe, in pitfall traps, 11/06–10/07.2021, 2♂♂; vil. Payivka [49.33041N, 26.10859E; 355 m a.s.l.], abandoned fruit garden, coll. by hand, 08/08/2021, 2♂♂; vil. Rudka [50.06209N, 25.63738E; 382 m a.s.l.], pine forest, coll. by hand, 01/06/2010, 1♂; **Volyn** oblast, vil. Brody [51.74478N, 24.53419E; 153 m a.s.l.], sphagnum bog, coll. by hand, 20/08/2015, 1♂; vil. Holiadyn [51.43417N, 23.86419E; 166 m a.s.l.], birch forest, 23/05–17/06/2018, 14♂♂, 9♀♀; Kivertsi [50.84064N, 25.43985E; 198 m a.s.l.], artificial urban green areas, coll. by hand, 14/06/2023, 2♂♂; vil. Solovychi [51.05742N, 24.50311E; 190 m], pine forest, 05/06/2015, 2♂♂; vil. Svalovychi [51.86785N, 25.63233E; 141 m a.s.l.], heathland at the place of arable land, in pitfall traps, 26/06–25/10/2019, 21♂♂ (leg. et det. A. Hirna); vil. Tsuman [50.87136N, 25.87934E; 197 m a.s.l.], alder forest, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 4♂♂, [50.91202N, 25.89251E; 199 m a.s.l.], pine forest with *Vaccinium myrtillus*, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 29♂♂, [50.91074N, 25.88615E; 198 m a.s.l.], birch forest, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 21♂♂, [50.90968N, 25.87804E; 194 m a.s.l.], spruce forest, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 2♂♂ (leg. K. Sukhomlin, O. Zinchenko, T. Trush, det. A. Hirna); vil. Zarika (Mokh f.n.) [51.75057N, 25.53555E; 145 m], sphagnum bog, in pitfall traps, 20/06–01/10/2019, 3♂♂, vil. Zatyshia [51.57331N, 23.89973E; 165 m a.s.l.], pine forest (30-year-old) at the place of abandoned pasture, in pitfall traps, 23/05–16/06/2018, 51♂♂, 38♀♀; vil. Zhuravychi [50.96447N, 25.77679E; 216 m a.s.l.], hornbeam-oak forest, in pitfall traps, 14/06–03/08/2023, 6♂♂; **Zakarpattia** oblast, vil. Domashyn (Stinka mt. ridge) [49.00503N, 22.55569E; 945–965 m a.s.l.], tall grass communities with patches of [*Vaccinium*] heath, in pitfall traps, 21/06–11/07/2018, 3♂♂, 18/V–04/VI/2019, 2♂♂, vil. Honcosh (Rika riv.) [48.34168, 23.50556; 289 m a.s.l.], unvegetated gravel river bank, in pitfall traps, 20/04–30/05/2013, 1♂1♀; vil. Kholmets [48.52916N, 22.39500E; 216 m a.s.l.], xerothermic edge of the young oak [*Quercus petraea*] forest, in pitfall traps, 01/06–20/06/2012, 1♂; Kuzii f.n. [47.94139N, 24.11806E; 617 m a.s.l.], beech forest on the rock outcrops, coll. by hand, 10/05/2014, 1♂; vil. Kvasy (Kopytsia Mt.) [48.14272N, 24.33141E; 1050 m a.s.l.], raspberry bushes in the beech forest felling area, coll. by hand, 01/07/1999, 4♂♂; vil. Vyshkovo [48.0603N, 23.43805E; 185 m a.s.l.], unvegetated gravel river bank, coll. by hand, 20/05/2016, 1♂; vil. Zabrid [48.93215N, 22.48962E; 430 m a.s.l.], xerothermic forest edges and glades, in pitfall traps, 24/04–09/10/2013, 5♂♂, 15♀♀ (leg. et det. A. Hirna).

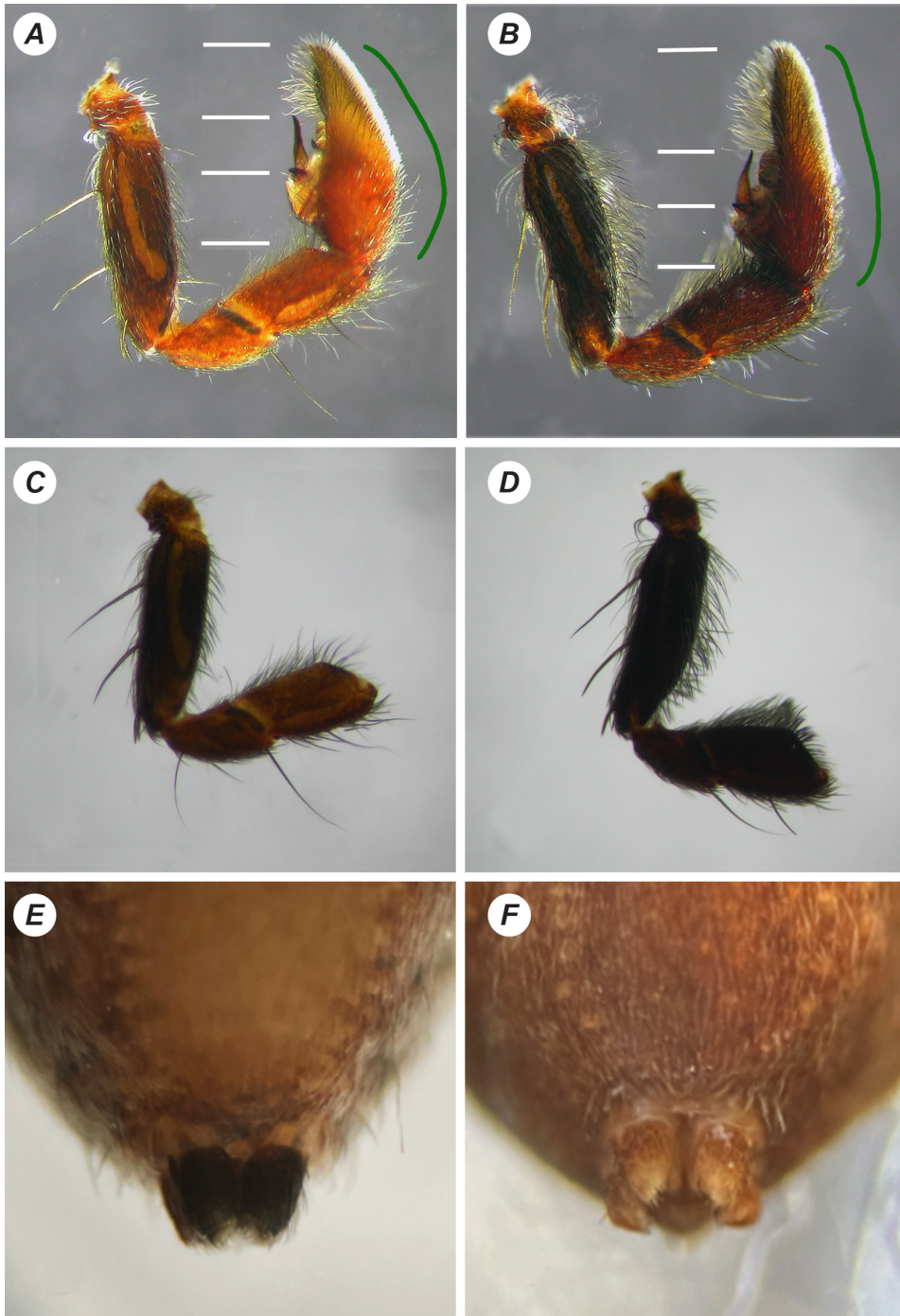


Fig. 2. Pedipalp, lateral view: the green line indicates the general shape of the cymbium, and white lines illustrate the proportions of the distal part of the cymbium relative to the length of the tegular apophysis and the cymbium: **A** – *P. lugubris*; **B** – *P. saltans*. The bristles on the palpal femur and tibia: **C** – *P. lugubris*; **D** – *P. saltans*. The coloration of the spinnerets: **E** – *P. lugubris*; **F** – *P. saltans*

***Pardosa saltans* Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000: Figs. 2B, 2D, 2F**

Ukraine: **Lviv** oblast, Lviv, Regional Landscape Park “Znesinnia” [49.85156N, 24.06768E; 265 m a.s.l.], forest edge of wetlands, in pitfall traps, 02/06–04/07/2023, 8♂♂; [49.84779N, 24.07555°E; 283 m a.s.l.], xerothermic forest edges, in pitfall traps, 02/06–04/07/2023, 2♂♂; **Rivne** oblast, vil. Tarakaniv: Tarakaniv Fort [50.36310N, 25.71617E; 228 m a.s.l.], successional vegetation on the fortress remains, by hand, 15/06/2023, 7♂♂; **Volyn** oblast, Kivertsi [50.84064N, 25.43985E; 198 m a.s.l.], artificial urban green areas, coll. by hand, 14/06/2023, 2♂♂ (leg. A. Hirna, det. A. Hirna, O. Lopatka); vil. Tsuman, NNP “Tsumanska Pushcha” [50.87136N, 25.87934E; 197 m a.s.l.], alder forest, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 73♂♂, [50.91202N, 25.89251E; 199 m a.s.l.], pine forest with *Vaccinium myrtillus*, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 161♂♂, [50.91074N E 25.88615E; 198 m a.s.l.], birch forest, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 85♂♂, [50.90968N, 25.87804E; 194 m a.s.l.], spruce forest, in pitfall traps, 14/05–25/09/2023, 22♂♂ (leg. K. Sukhomlin, O. Zinchenko, T. Trush, det. A. Hirna); vil. Zhuravychi, NNP “Tsumanska Pushcha” [50.96447N, 25.77679E; 216 m a.s.l.], hornbeam-oak forest, in pitfall traps, 14/06–03/08/2023, 15♂♂ (leg. A. Hirna, det. A. Hirna, O. Lopatka).

The two species have entirely blackish-brown palps (unlike *P. alacris*) and are primarily distinguished by palp structure. Specifically, in specimens of *P. saltans*, the distal part of the cymbium is longer than in *P. lugubris* (Fig. 2A,B), and the claw at the cymbium tip is small and hidden among the bristles. The general shape of the cymbium in lateral view is straight in *P. saltans* (Fig. 2B), whereas in *P. lugubris*, it is more convex at the base (Fig. 2A).

The two species can also be effectively differentiated by comparing the bristles on the palpal femur and tibia, particularly laterally (Fig. 2C,D). In *P. saltans*, the tibia, femur, and proximal parts of the cymbium are strongly covered with long dark bristles (Fig. 2D; Töpfer-Hofmann & von Helvesen, 1990; Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000; Harvey, 2004).

Among the simple traits that allow easy identification of male specimens is the coloration of the spinnerets. Specimens of *P. lugubris* can be quickly sorted based on their contrastingly darker anterior spinnerets (Fig. 2E,F), after which the identification can be further confirmed by examining the structure of the palps. This simplifies working with material from pitfall trap samples, as representatives of the *Pardosa lugubris* group belong to an abundant species. Unfortunately, the females have no reliable characteristics to distinguish the two species (Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000). We did not confirm any differences between the structure of the epigyne/vulvae; however, darker anterior spinnerets were observed in some females.

P. saltans occurs in forests and forest edges in the west of Ukraine. The highest number of individuals has been recorded within the forest ecosystems of Volhynian Polissia, specifically in the territory of the Kivertsivsky NPP “Tsumanska Pushcha” (Volyn oblast).

P. lugubris occurs in a wider range of habitats, being eurytopic. In none of the reviewed samples did we find *P. saltans* alone; it was always found together with *P. lugubris*. In some localities, such as the RLP “Znesinnia” (Lviv), a third species from this species-group, *P. alacris*, was also part of the communities. The coexistence of morphologically similar species from the *Pardosa lugubris* group is a common phenomenon (Töpfer-Hofmann *et al.*, 2000).

CONCLUSION

Distinguishing morphologically similar species is essential for inventory studies, which aim to comprehensively and accurately assess biodiversity in specific regions. The presented data expand information on the fauna of Volyn, Lviv, and Rivne oblasts, including adjustments to the annotated list of spiders of Lviv oblast (Hirna, Zhukovets, 2022). Confirmed records of *P. saltans* provide grounds for including this species in Ukraine's spider fauna checklist.

Given the distribution and abundance of *P. saltans* in the west of Ukraine, as well as the coexistence of morphologically similar species in the same habitat, a similar revision of collections of *Pardosa lugubris* (s. lato) should be conducted for samples from other physio-geographical regions, particularly from Polissia and the Volhynia-Podolian Upland.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful K. Sukhomlin, O. Zinchenko, and T. Trush (Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University) for the materials provided for identification from NNP "Tsumanska Pushcha".

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

Conflict of Interest: the authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Human Rights: this article does not contain any studies with human subjects performed by any of the authors.

Animal studies: all international, national, and institutional guidelines for the care and use of laboratory animals were followed.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, [A.H.]; methodology, [A.H.]; validation, [A.H.]; formal analysis, [A.H.]; investigation, [A.H.; O.L.]; resources, [A.H.]; writing – original draft preparation, [A.H.; O.L.]; writing – review and editing, [A.H.]; visualization, [A.H.; O.L.] supervision, [A.H.].

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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ЗНАХІДКИ *PARDOSA SALTANS* TÖPFER-HOFMANN, 2000 (ARANEAE, LYCOSIDAE) В УКРАЇНІ

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Обґрунтування. У статті розглядається проблема ідентифікації двох морфологічно подібних видів групи *Pardosa lugubris*, а саме *Pardosa lugubris* (Walckenaer, 1802) і *Pardosa saltans* Töpfer-Hofmann, 2000. На сьогодні *P. saltans* не включений до опублікованих зведених списків павуків в Україні. Однак можна припустити, що ареал охоплює країну, оскільки простягається через всю Європу, від Іспанії та Ірландії до півдня європейської частини Росії та Грузії. Відтак, ревізію колекційних матеріалів спрямували, з одного боку, на підтвердження поширення *P. saltans* в Україні, з іншого – на перевірку правильності визначення *P. lugubris*, одного з найпоширеніших видів родини Lycosidae.

Матеріал і методи. Ревізію проведено на матеріалах, зібраних у період від 1999 до 2024 рр. у шести адміністративних областях заходу України. Дослідження, відтак, охоплювало Волинське й Мале Полісся, Розточчя та Волино-Подільську

височину, Передкарпаття і Карпати. Досліджено ізольовані пальпи самців і відокремлені очищені епігіни/вувли. Види павуків визначено за відповідними описами та визначниками.

Результати. Результати досліджень підтверджують правильну ідентифікацію *P. lugubris* у більшості локалітетів шести областей заходу України. Задokumentовано перші знахідки *P. saltans* у Волинській, Львівській і Рівненській областях, що водночас є першими підтвердженими знахідками виду на Волинському Поліссі та Волино-Подільській височині. Наведено фотографії частин тіла павуків, що відображають діагностичні особливості виду. Вивірені локалітети *P. lugubris* і *P. saltans* нанесено на карту.

Висновки. Беручи до уваги, що *P. saltans* трапляється у різних регіонах України та локально має високу щільність популяцій, результати дослідження підтверджують необхідність переглянути колекційні матеріали *Pardosa lugubris* (s. lato) для виокремлення особин *P. saltans* і забезпечення їхньої диференціації під час першого опрацювання зборів з території країни.

Ключові слова: павуки, *Pardosa lugubris* видова група, локалітети, біорізноманіття, захід України