

A NEW SPECIES OF SPIDER (FAMILY: ARANEIDAE) FROM GUJARAT, INDIA

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DURING the survey of spider fauna from Bhavnagar and nearby places a peculiar member of the genus *Neoscona* Simon (Family: Araneidae) was noticed. The members of this family are known as typical orb-weavers as they spin true orb-webs, having a geometrical precision and beauty¹⁻⁴. Our collection showed distinct differences from other species described earlier⁵⁻⁸ and hence the organism is designated as a new species, *N. bihumpi* based on its typical character of having two prominent shoulder humps on the abdomen (*bihumpi*).

Neoscona bihumpi sp. nov.

General

Cephalothorax yellowish, legs and abdomen yellowish with dark patches. Total length 6.50 mm. Carapace 2.50 mm long, 3 mm wide; abdomen 4.50 mm long, 5 mm wide.

Cephalothorax

Longer than wide, narrowing in front, clothed with pubescence. Cephalic region high and light brown in colour, thoracic region brown and provided with a deep longitudinal groove. Ocular quad longer than wide, anteriorly and posteriorly more or less of the same width; both rows of eyes recurved; anterior medians are of equal size; laterals close and each situated on a tubercle. Sternum heart-shaped, pointed behind with silvery white patches, clothed with hairs and pubescences; labium wider than long, brown with pale distal end; maxillae broader at distal end provided with distinct scopulae. Chelicerae strong, yellowish brown, provided with moderate boss. Legs long and moderately strong, brown with dark bands.

Abdomen

Sub-triangular, longer than wide, provided with two shoulder humps, clothed with hairs and pubescence. Dorsum of abdomen dark brown with silvery white patches. Ventral side dirty brown in colour with silvery white patches in front of the

spinnerets. Epigynal scape provided with constriction at the bending point. Epigyne, internal genitalia, and male palp as shown in figure 1d-f respectively. Male is smaller than the female.

Holotype: Female, *paratype*: Two females, *allotype*: One male preserved.

Type-locality: Gadhada (C. 72 km South West of Bhavnagar), Gujarat, India.

The spider resembles *Neoscona nautica* L. Koch, but it differs as: (i) The ocular quad which is anteriorly and posteriorly of the same width (In *N. nautica* it is wider in front than behind). (ii) The sternum has silvery white patches instead of a median longitudinal chalk-white band (as in *N. nautica*), (iii) Presence of a pair of shoulder humps,

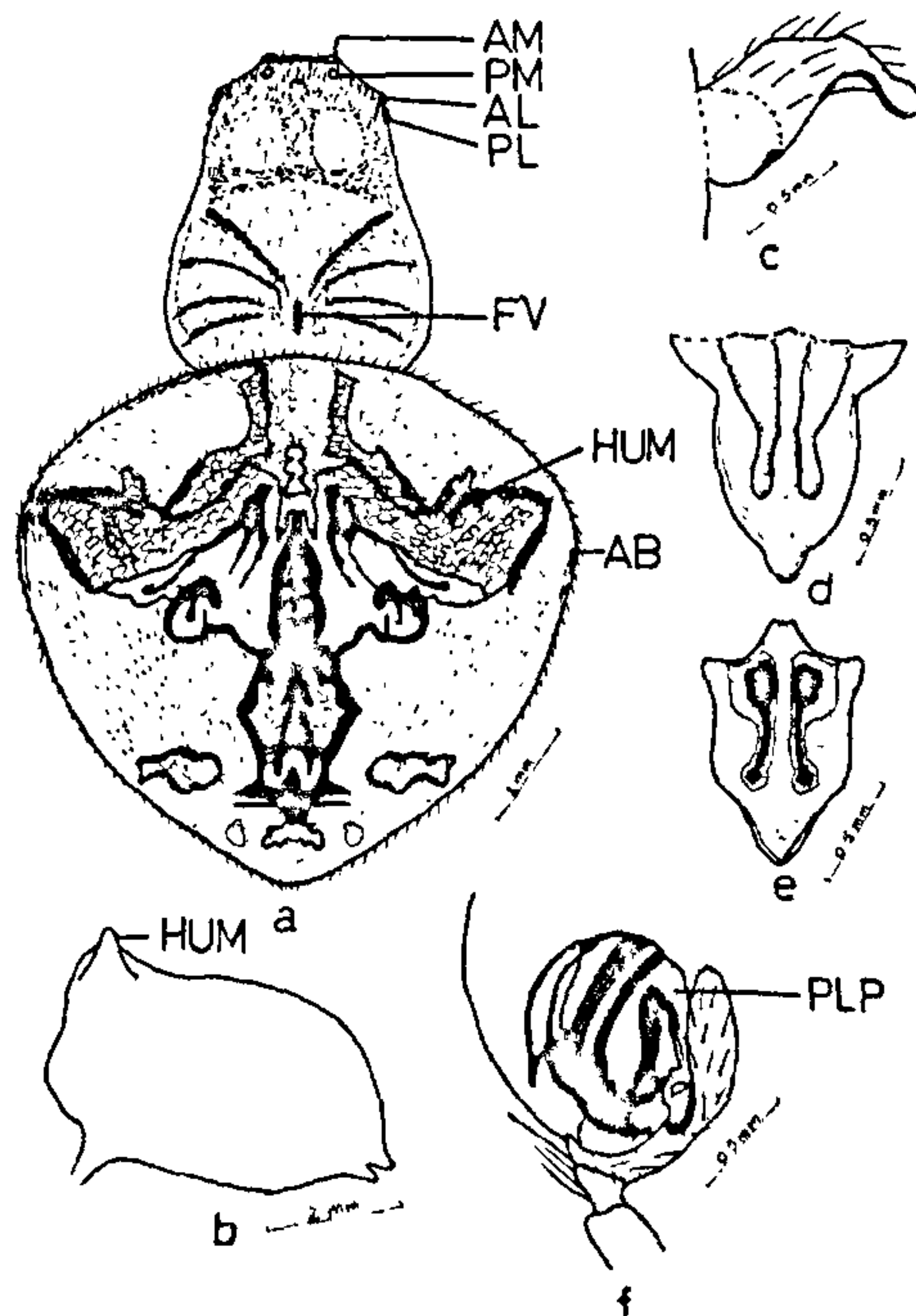


Figure 1a-f. *Neoscona bihumpi* sp. nov.: a. Dorsal view of female, legs omitted; b. Lateral view of abdomen with hump; c. Epigyne (lateral view); d. Epigyne (ventral view); e. Internal genitalia, and f. Male palp [AM, Anterior median eyes; AL, Anterior lateral eyes; PM, Posterior median eyes; PL, Posterior lateral eyes; FV, Fovea; Ab, Abdomen; HUM, Hump; PLP, Palps].

(absent in *N. nautica*), and (iv) Differences in the structure of epigyne and internal genitalia.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF PROFESSOR SIR C. V. RAMAN AND THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE RAMAN EFFECT AT CALCUTTA

Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi will be the chief guest for the above celebrations to be held on Wednesday 2 November 1988. He will dedicate a national monument to the memory of Professor Raman and release six volumes of the Scientific Papers of C. V. Raman and a biography. He will also present Raman centenary medals to the distinguished scientists and former associates of Professor Raman. The 54th Annual Meeting of the Indian Academy of Sciences will be held on 31st October and 1st November 1988 so that Fellows who attend the Annual Meeting can also take part in the celebrations on 2nd November.

All Fellows and Associates attending the Annual Meeting will be paid first class railway fare from their place of residence to Calcutta and back, in case they are unable to obtain travel support from other sources. Arrangements for the stay of Fellows will be taken care of by the local organizers. During the period of the Annual Meeting the Editorial Boards and Sectional Committees will also meet at Calcutta.

Further particulars can be had from the Secretary, Indian Academy of Sciences, Post Box No. 8005, Bangalore 560 080.

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