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**ON THE SYNONYMY OF *MYRMARACHNE CALCUTTAENSIS*  
BISWAS, 1984 (ARANEAE: SALTICIDAE)**

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**Summary.** The type material of *Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* Biswas, 1984 kept at the Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, has been studied. *M. calcuttaensis* **syn. n.** is recognized as a junior synonym of *M. melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839.

**Key words:** jumping spiders, taxonomy, type specimen, new synonymy, India.

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**Резюме.** Изучен типовой материал паука *Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* Biswas, 1984, хранящийся в Зоологической службе Индии, Калькутта. Установлено, что *M. calcuttaensis* **syn. n.** является младшим синонимом *M. melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839.

**INTRODUCTION**

The ant-mimicking jumping spider genus *Myrmarachne* was established by MacLeay (1839), with *M. melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839 designated as its type species. Presently, the genus encompasses 192 species worldwide (World Spider Catalog, 2025). In India, 22 species have been documented (Caleb & Sankaran, 2025), though only a few have undergone modern taxonomic treatment (Benjamin, 2015; Caleb, 2016; Caleb & Benjamin, 2017; Tripathi *et al.*, 2023). Despite its richness, much of the genus remains poorly studied (Caleb, 2016), with two Indian species recently classified as *nomina dubia* (Sherwood & Caleb, 2024). The present study seeks to resolve the taxonomic ambiguity surrounding *Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* Biswas, 1984, originally described from East India.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

Specimens were examined and imaged by a Leica DFC500 HD camera attached to a Leica M205 A stereomicroscope equipped with Leica Application Suite (LAS) version 3.8. The studied material is kept in the National Zoological Collections, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, India (NZC-ZSI).

## TAXONOMY

Family Salticidae Blackwall, 1841

Genus *Myrmarachne* MacLeay, 1839

### *Myrmarachne melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839

Figs 1–7

*Myrmarachne melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839: 11, pl. 1, fig. 4 (D♂); Benjamin, 2015: 2625, figs 17A-D, 18A-D, 19A-D (♂); Caleb, 2016: 410, figs 20-30 (♂♀).

*Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* Biswas, 1984: 126, figs 17-19 (D♀); holotype ♀ in NZC-ZSI, examined; **syn. n.**

TYPE MATERIAL EXAMINED. *Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* Biswas, 1984: Holotype ♀ (NZC-ZSI-5119/18) from India: West Bengal, Kolkata (=Calcutta), Alipore, Zoological Garden, 04.I 1982, coll. Bijan Biswas.



Figs 1–7. *Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* Biswas, 1984, **syn. n.** (= *Myrmarachne melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839). 1 – holotype female habitus, dorsal view; 2 – the same, ventral view; 3 – the same, lateral view; 4 – additional females from type locality, dorsal view; 5 – epigyne of larger female, ventral view; 6 – epigyne of smaller female, ventral view; 7 – labels. Scale bars: (1–4) 1 mm, (5–6) 0.2 mm.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL EXAMINED. India: Kerala, Alappuzha, Changaram near Ezhupunna, 9.7966 N, 76.2958 E, h=04 m, 20.VIII 2024, 1 ♀ (BMCAM2024014), coll. Anitha Abraham, from ground, by hand.

COMMENTS. Biswas (1984) described *Myrmarachne calcuttaensis* from Alipore, Kolkata, West Bengal, India, based on a holotype female. The description was accompanied by schematic illustrations of the epigyne and internal genitalia (Biswas, 1984: figs 18 & 19). Upon re-examination of the holotype (Figs 1–3), we discovered that the dissected epigyne was missing. However, two additional female specimens (Fig. 4), collected from the same location and labelled as "paratypes" (Fig. 7), were found alongside the holotype. Notably, these specimens were not designated as paratypes in the original description. A detailed examination of these specimens revealed that their general morphology and genitalic structure are identical to those of *M. melanocephala* MacLeay, 1839: epigyne with a pair of oval copulatory openings, twisted copulatory ducts, and lateral pockets positioned above the epigastric furrow (cf. Figs 1–6 and figs 17–19 in Biswas (1984) with figs 3B–D & 5 in Edwards & Benjamin (2009) and figs 26–30 in Caleb (2016)), clearly indicate that *M. calcuttaensis* is a junior synonym of *M. melanocephala*. Furthermore, both *M. melanocephala* and *M. calcuttaensis* were originally described from Bengal, a region corresponding to present-day West Bengal, India, and Bangladesh, further substantiating their conspecificity.

REMARK. For a complete list of taxonomic references see World Spider Catalog (2025).

DISTRIBUTION. Pakistan to Indonesia (World Spider Catalog, 2025).

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