A KEY FOR IDENTIFICATION OF SPIDERS (ORDER:ARANEIDA) AT ASSIUT GOVERNORATE, UPPER EGYPT

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Abstract - Spiders are one of the most species rich groups of terrestrial animals. They strongly affect the density of insect populations and have been shown to limit insect pests in the agricultural environment. On reviewing literature that focused on the Egyptian spider's fauna, it could be concluded that the correct identification of many spider species is considered problematic due to complex variation in morphology and lack of systematic studies. Thus, the present study was aimed to design a key to facilitate identification of terrestrial spiders using their morphological characteristics. Samples of spiders were collected monthly duringa period of one year (from December, 2015 till November 2016)from six different sites covering Assiut governorate; the central part of UpperEgypt (27º14' N and 31º11' E) and lies within the arid belt of North Africa,using hand picking, sweep net and pitfall-trap methods. Survey results revealed the occurrence of 3457 specimens belonging to 22 families that included 42 genera and 47 species.

Keywords - Systematic Key, Spiders, Araneida, Assiut Governorate, Egypt.