

EARLY CRETACEOUS SCORPIONS FROM THE ARARIPE BASIN, NE BRAZIL

de Carvalho, M. G. P. and Maisey, J. G.

Scorpions are a rare component of the fossil assemblage from the Crato Limestone of the Araripe Basin (Early Cretaceous; Late Aptian). Only one specimen has been described previously (the holotype of *Araripescorpius ligabuei* Campos, 1986). A preliminary report on some new specimens is presented here. These fossils are important as early representatives of modern scorpions, which are classified collectively as orthosternans. These are distinguished from more primitive extinct scorpions by the presence of only three pairs of compound lateral eyes, and spiracles which are positioned on the sternite rather than at its margin. Existing phylogenetic analysis of modern scorpions rely on many characters which are unavailable in fossils, and conversely characters used in the past to classify extinct scorpions are considered largely unreliable. We have nevertheless attempted to place the fossils from Araripe within a modern cladistic framework, and will present our results to date.