

## Advance in the study of biodiversity of Caucasian spiders (Araneae)

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**Abstract:** The history of investigation of the Caucasian areaneofauna can be divided into four periods: 1866-1938, 1939-1978, 1979-1998 and 1999 to the present. According to published data, over 1000 species belonging to 46 families are known from the Caucasus. The species richest families are as follows: Linyphiidae (~180), Salticidae (122), Gnaphosidae (>100), Lycosidae (>100), Theridiidae (80), Dysderidae (70) and Thomisidae (70). In the different families endemism values vary from 0 to 100%. The average level of endemism in the Caucasus is about 22%, the highest level of endemism among species-rich families was found in the Dysderidae, being around 60%.

**Key words:** spiders, Caucasus, fauna, zoogeography, endemism