

Project Update: September 2015

From June 2015, six visits of 4 days each have been carried out to the study sites. During these studies, millipede diversity, ecology and distribution have been documented in a disturbed forest (Mbalmayo Forest Reserve- 3°31'N, 11°31'E) and a natural forest (Campo'o Man'an National Park-Dipikar island-2°17'N, 9°57'E). All suitable shelters including those under stones, bark, fallen branches, and layers of leaf litter have been prospected, with specimens preserved in 90% ethanol (Fig. 1).



Fig.1: Collecting small millipedes in sifted litter

Overall 252 samples (42 samples/month/ forest x 2 forest types x 3 months) containing 20 species or morphospecies in 10 subfamilies were recorded in those two forest types. Cryptodesmidae was the dominant subfamily with 5 species, followed by Odontopygidae (4 species), Pachybolidae (3 species), Scolopendridae and Spirostreptidae (2 species each). *Aporodesmus gabonicus* was the most common species (14.81% of occurrences) followed by *Centrobolus* sp. and *Odontopygidae* sp.1 (12.96% each).

Specifically, in disturbed forest, 14 morphospecies belonging to 10 subfamilies were recorded. Amongst these species eight were found only in this forest: *Aporodesmus gabonicus*, *Lithobiomorpha* gen. sp., *Oxydesmus* sp., *Centrobolus* sp., *Paracordyloporus porati*, *Paradoxosomatidae* gen. sp., *Urodesmus* sp. 1, *Spirostreptidae* gen. sp. 3. All millipedes and centipedes were collected on or inside of leaf litter (2 – 6 cm) and in the topsoil. Specimens of *A. gabonicus* were always collected on the first centimeters deep in leaf litter while specimens of *Lithobiomorpha* gen. sp were only found in the soil (1-2 cm).



Left to right: *Aporodesmus gabonicus*; *Centrobolus* sp. & *Lithobiomorpha* gen. sp

In natural forest, 13 morphospecies belonging to seven subfamilies were recorded. Four morphospecies were specific to this forest: *Urodesmus* sp. 2, *Odontopygidae* gen sp. 3, *Peridontopyge* gen. sp. and *Thrincolus* sp. Like in disturbed forest, most of specimens were found inside of leaf litter (1 – 4 cm) and within the first centimeters of topsoil.



Left to right: *Urodesmus* sp. 2; *Peridontopyge* gen. sp. & *Thrincolus* sp.

Seven species or morphospecies were collected in both disturbed and natural forest: *Aporodesmus gabonicus*, *Lithobiomorpha* gen. sp., *Odontopygidae* gen. sp. 2, *Scolopendridae* gen. sp., *Spirostreptidae* gen. sp. 1, *Spirostreptidae* gen. sp. 3.

Cameroon's millipede fauna is poorly known yet. Most of the species or morphospecies collected seem to represent new species to be described. Until now, identifications have only been made at the family or genus level with its specific code. Further research is in progress, both in the field and in the lab.