

***Dicranopalpus ramosus* agg. Identification tips.**

There are two almost identical species making up the *Dicranopalpus ramosus* species aggregate, *D. ramosus* and *D. caudatus*. They are both easily recognized in the field by the 'tuning-fork' pedipalps and the resting posture of the legs held out together at right angles to the body. Male *D. ramosus* usually has a prominent dark 'Zorro' mask across the ocularium, which is generally absent in *D. caudatus* although there may be some patchy black marks so this may not be a reliable feature for identification. Careful examination under magnification is therefore needed, with known specimens for comparison or dissection.

Where the ID is not certain the epithet sensu lato is used, when known then sensu stricto is used.

Females can be told apart by looking at the chelicerae – a glossy black band is present on *D. ramosus*, and only a slightly dark band on *D. caudatus*.



Female

Above: *Dicranopalpus ramosus* sensu lato typical resting posture with legs held together outstretched and showing 'tuning-fork' pedipalps.


Male or female?

Female has thickened pedipalp apophysis covered in fine setae (arrowed, left). Male has much thinner, smoother apophysis (arrowed, right).



Male



Male *Dicranopalpus* spp. require microscopic examination to determine species. 

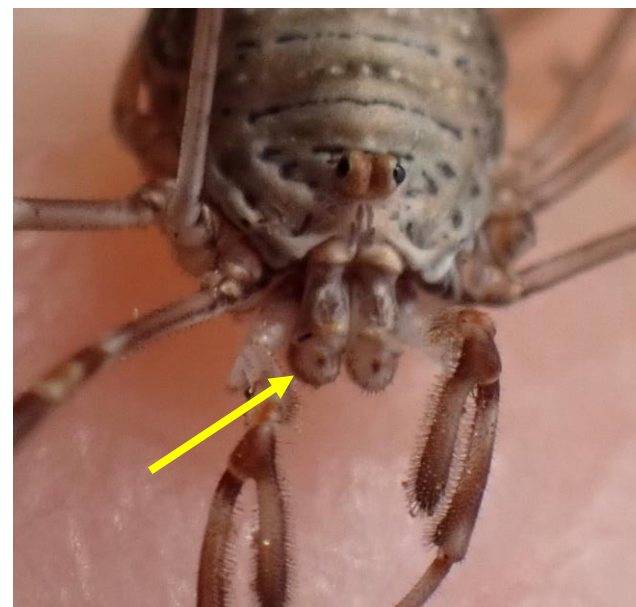
Left: male *D. ramosus* sensu stricto with dark 'Zorro' mask (arrowed); this feature may not be diagnostic.



Above: male *D. caudatus* showing patchy mask.



Above: female *D. ramosus* glossy black bands on chelicerae seen from below and from the side (arrowed).



Above: female *D. caudatus* faint dark band on chelicerae seen from front and side (arrowed).