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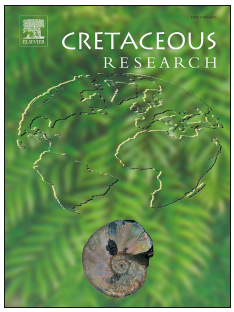

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A new praying mantis from middle Cretaceous Burmese amber exhibits bilateral asymmetry of forefemoral spination (Insecta: Dictyoptera)

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Abstract. Here we describe a new praying mantis species, *Burmantis hexispinea* sp. nov., from middle Cretaceous Burmese amber. The new species differs from other species of *Burmantis* in the forefemoral spination with six large spines, instead of five. Although not the first adult of *Burmantis*, the holotype provides exclusive adult morphology of this genus: the wing venation is typical of Mantodea, and male terminalia are symmetrical or nearly symmetrical, with long cerci and styli. The holotype exhibits intraspecific variation in the forefemoral spination between the leg pair, and this suggests caution when proposing new taxa based on such characters.

Key words: *Burmantis*, mantid, Mantodea, middle Cretaceous, Myanmar, venation

1. Introduction

Mantodea, or praying mantises, are remarkable for their predatory behaviour, associated with several morphological characters, such as agile body, bulging eyes, and raptorial forelegs. Although popular in both academia and the public, they are rarely found in fossils. Among more than 2400