

# Tiny water creepy crawlies from South Korea and the Russian Far East

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This image shows one of the newly discovered water mite species *Torrenticola kimichungi*. Credit: Vladimir Pešić

Water mites of the family Torrenticolidae are tiny, heavily sclerotized and crawling water creatures presently known from all continents except

Antarctica. More than 400 species are described so far but this is expected to be only a minor part of their diversity, especially in the tropical areas where the family is most species abundant. Until recently only one species was known from South Korea, and five from the Russian Far East. A recent study, published in the open access journal *Zookeys*, adds up to the diversity in these regions with 2 new to science species and 5 described from South Korea for the first time.

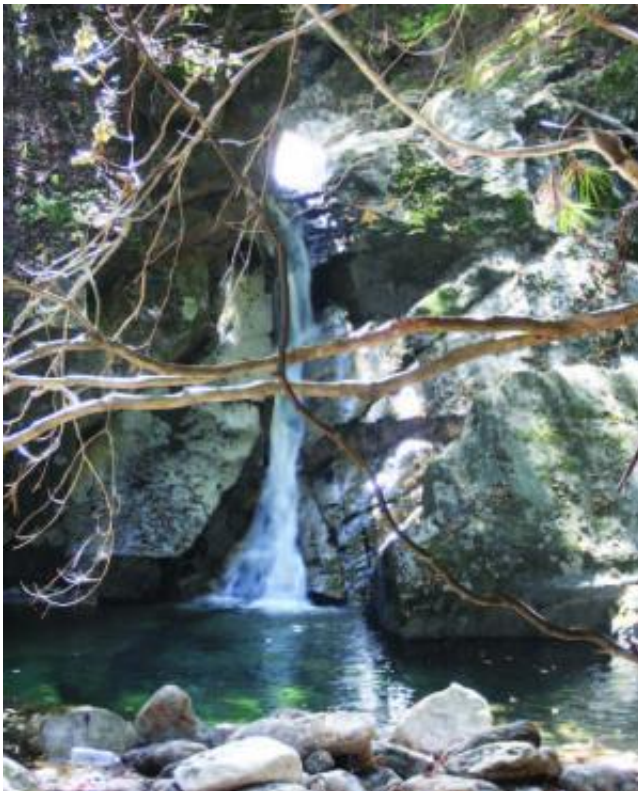


This image shows one of the gorgeous habitats of the water mites, the Inje River, South Korea. Credit: Vladimir Pešić

The two new species *Torrenticola kimichungi* and *Monatractides abei*, have been described from [South Korea](#) and the [Russian Far East](#) as a

part of the project aimed at uncovering Korean invertebrate diversity, and led by the National Institute of Biological Resources (NIBR). The species have been named to commemorate the contributions of two scientist Drs Il-Hoi Kim and Kyung-Sook Chung and Dr Hiroshi Abe for their extensive studies in the area of water mites.

"Water mites are a diverse and widespread but still neglected group of freshwater fauna. In natural streams, [species diversity](#) of water mites is generally rather high and may reach, or occasionally even exceed, 50 species at single collecting site, often most of these are torrenticolid mites. Torrenticolid mites avoid habitats with silty substrata and intermittent flow, and their study can give valuable information on the ecological characteristics of the areas with an unstable surface water regime", says the lead author Vladimir Pešić, Department of Biology, University of Montenegro.



This image shows the one of the variety of habitat of the water mite species, the JiriSan National Park, in South Korea. Credit: Vladimir Pešić

**More information:** Pešić V, Semenchenko KA, Lee W (2013)  
Torrenticolid water mites from Korea and the Russian Far East. *ZooKeys*  
299: 21, [doi: 10.3897/zookeys.299.5272](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.299.5272)

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