

Field Guide to the **Scorpions** of **NAMIBIA**

The Proposal

There is no complete identification guide available for Namibia's scorpion species.

Building on from my first book, a **Field Guide to Scorpions of South Africa**, published by Struik Nature in 2023, I aim to produce such a guide. It will cover all 70 species known from the country, including their varieties and habitats, and will include comprehensive descriptions, distribution maps, and treatment of stings. Such a book will be of use to citizens, tourists, the hospitality industry, conservationists, researchers, medical practitioners and educators alike. Struik Nature has agreed to publish this book, and it would be a key contribution to the suite of field guides celebrating the incredible biodiversity of this country.

Namibia's astounding scorpion richness is due to its arid climate and rich geological diversity producing ideal habitats such as the Namib sand sea, the gravel plains, Naukluft mountains, and Koakoveld. Some species are incredibly rare and seldom seen by humans. Forty Namibian species do not occur in South Africa and are not covered in the first book. Namibia is home to the largest thickettail scorpion species in the world, and a whole scorpion family, the Bothriuridae, is considered a Gondwanan relic found only in Namibia and marginally in Angola. One species is known from just two specimens found on the summit of the Brandberg mountain, and one rock scorpion species is limited to a small mountain range surrounded by the dunes of the Namib.



Surveys for scorpions will be guided by sophisticated models to optimise the number of species obtained for time and funds spent. This fieldwork will also provide the opportunity to search new areas for undescribed species, aided by satellite imagery for locating isolated and unsampled habitats, thus contributing to broader knowledge of biodiversity and conservation efforts.

Sponsorship

I need to raise **N\$1,000,000 (US\$50,000)** to cover fieldwork equipment, travel, and living costs for 12 months to obtain photographs of scorpions and their habitats and to prepare the manuscript. I hope to reach this goal through corporate sponsorships. Contributions of **N\$100,000 (US\$5,000)** and above will receive special acknowledgement in the book with your company logo included on the imprint page and back cover. Sponsors will also be acknowledged in any social media, marketing, or public outreach efforts during the fieldwork.

A complimentary copy of *Scorpions of South Africa* will gladly be provided to prospective sponsors. Please visit namibiascorpions.site/sponsor or email ian@namibiascorpions.site for more information. The story behind the first book is available on YouTube at bit.ly/scorptalk.

The Author

Ian Engelbrecht is an expert on scorpions and mygalomorph spiders in southern Africa. Prior to authoring the first complete identification guide to South African scorpions he obtained a PhD in Zoology from the University of Pretoria for his work on trapdoor spiders. He coordinates the Baboon Spider Atlas project and has worked for several biodiversity and conservation organisations. He has described several species new to science and has a spider species, *Lepthercus engelbrechti*, named after him.

