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Taxonomy and systematics of the 'backobourkiine' spiders, a putative new subfamily of orb-weavers (Araneae, Araneidae).

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The spider family Araneidae includes medium-sized to large orb-weavers with generally vertical webs. A recent multi-gene molecular study supported a paraphyletic 'Araneinae', indicating the existence of new clades, including the Australasian/Pacific 'backobourkiine' spiders, with most of its species historically misplaced in *Araneus* and *Eriophora*. The backobourkiines are the most speciose and most abundant group of orb-weaving spiders in Australia and include species commonly referred to as Garden Orb-weavers. They can also be found in Asia, the Pacific and in New Zealand, and recent data suggests its presence in the Afrotropical region. The backobourkiines now consist of 70 species in 10 genera: *Novakiella* (two species), *Backobourkia* (four species), *Lariniophora* (one species), *Plebs* (22 species), *Hortophora* (13 species), *Socca* (12 species), *Salsa* (seven species), *Leviana* (five species), *Quokkaraneus* (one species) and *Kangaraneus* Castanheira & Framenau, 2023 (three species). As part of our current ABRS-funded revision of the backobourkiines, two more genera are currently being revised: *Acroaspis* (16 species) and *Carepalxis* L. Koch, 1872 (around 14). This presentation summarises our work on the dominant backobourkiines, including results of detailed phylogenetic analyses based on morphological and genomic data, that aims to clarify some relationships within the group that were poorly supported in previous studies.

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