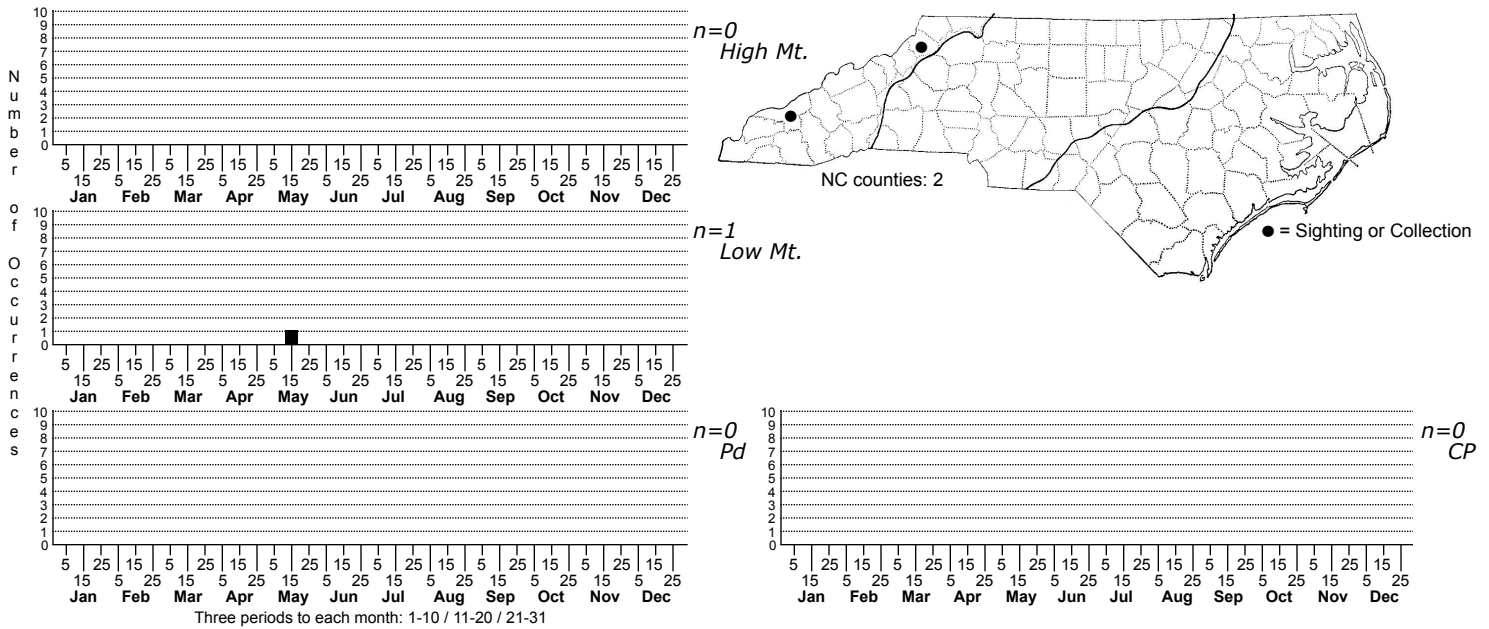


## *Viridiscus viridissimus*



FAMILY: Echiniscidae

TAXONOMIC COMMENTS: The genus was recently analyzed with integrative taxonomy by Momeni et al. 2023. This species was transferred from Echiniscus by Gasiorek et al. 2019. A newly described species *Viridiscus miraviridis* Nelson, Adkins Fletcher, Guidetti, Roszkowska, Grobys & Kaczmarek, 2021 was synonymized with *V. viridissimus* by Gasiorek et al. 2021.

SPECIES COMMENTS: Terrestrial. Recorded in Vietnam, Mexico, Argentina, and TN and NC in the US.

ID COMMENTS: Color olive green, not only of the plates, but of all the cuticle of the body, including the ventral surface, the legs, the claws, and the appendices: the plates, the claws, and the dentate collars of the 4th pair of legs are however of more intense green color. The plates present small white spots, irregularly arranged; the paired plates (II and III) have a rostral zone of apparently black circles, but which are actually small depressions, arranged near to each other and separated by clear protruding in profile, which outlines a reticular design; posteriorly to this rostral zone, the paired plates bear a whitish and brilliant transverse band, which follows a caudal zone with small white spots, of which is said above. Besides this sculpture, there is another, composed of a very fine and regular granulation, which is extended to the cuticle between the plates and on the legs. The third median plate (3) is absent, but the cuticle, which occupies its position, is strongly covered by the same type of sculpture, existing in the rostral zone of the paired plates (black circles). Terminal plate not faceted, with the usual two notches. All the plates – as is characteristic for the species of the “viridis group” – appear more clearly delineated than in the other Echiniscus. Cephalic appendices normal, cirri A about 80 μm long, clava elongated; there are no other lateral or dorsal appendices. The legs of the first pair bear a small spine, those of the 4th pair a basal papilla and a dentate collar, composed of large triangular teeth. Claws simple, without spurs (those wrote the author, but it is noted that – in the “viridis group” – the spurs are often extremely slender and visible only with immersion objective and phase contrast); the claws have basal part straight, which are hook-shaped at the apices: their length is about 20 μm on the 4th pair of legs and about 16 μm on the other legs. Eggs unknown. For the distinction of *viridissimus* from the other three species of the “viridis group” (*perviridis*, *rufoviridis*, *viridis*), we refer the reader to what is said in the description of *E. viridis*. -Ramazzotti & Maucci 1983

DISTRIBUTION: Please refer to the dot map.

HABITAT: In GSMNP rock lichen and one bird nest. In Johnson City, TN, Nelson found it on moss on concrete (limestone) exposed to sun and wind.

OBSERVATION METHODS: DIC and PC.