

## ***Athysanella bidentata* n.sp. (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae): a probable endemic leafhopper from the San Luis Valley in Colorado**

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### **Abstract**

A previously unknown species of *Athysanella* (subgenus *Athysanella*) is described and its host-plant association noted. *Athysanella bidentata* Hicks and Smith, n. sp., from salt grass (*Distichlis spicata* (L.) Greene) in Colorado's San Luis Valley, resembles *A. galeana* Hicks and Blocker and *A. parca* Ball and Beamer.

**Key words:** leafhopper, *Athysanella bidentata* new species, San Luis Valley endemic insects

### **Introduction**

An undescribed species of *Athysanella* was collected from a site west of Crestone, in the San Luis Valley of south central Colorado in June of 2000. The specimens were collected from salt grass, *Distichlis spicata* (Poaceae). *Athysanella* is a species-rich genus of small, usually flightless cicadellids that are commonly found in western North America feeding on grasses. The genus *Athysanella* was erected by Baker (1898) who included 7 species. A revision by Ball and Beamer (1940) and reviews by Blocker and Johnson (1988a, 1990a, 1990b) plus incidental species descriptions have brought the total of valid species close to 140, with the majority of the species in three of eight subgenera: *Athysanella*, *Amphipyga*, and *Gladionura*. An ongoing analysis of the phylogeny of the tribe Doraturini (in which *Athysanella* is placed) using mitochondrial DNA by James Zahniser of the Illinois Natural History Survey, suggests that these subgenera are not monophyletic (Zahniser, pers.comm.) and the placement here of *Athysanella bidentata* n. sp. in the subgenus *Athysanella* (*Athysanella*) is provisional. *Athysanella* (*Athysanella*) is distinguished from other subgenera of *Athysanella* by the presence of a hind tibial spur and the lack of a pygofer