



A new species-group of *Dissomphalus* (Hymenoptera: Bethyridae), with description of thirteen new species

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Abstract

The *microstictus* species-group is defined by having a latero-apical filament at the ventral ramus of the aedeagus. Thirteen new species are described and illustrated: *Dissomphalus balteus*, *D. divaricatus*, *D. forceps*, *D. incurvatus*, *D. osseus*, *D. paululus*, *D. perparvus*, *D. perturbatus*, *D. perventriosus*, *D. pilus*, *D. refertus*, *D. signatus* and *D. uncus*. Features of the basal portion of the dorsal body of the male genitalia are defined and described for the first time, including the basal bar, the connector and the basal plate. A key to the species of the *microstictus* species-group is included. A mating pair of *D. uncus* collected *in copula* is recorded and the female is described.

Key words: Pristocerinae, *conicus* species-group, *D. xanthopus*, bilaminar paramere

Introduction

Since *Dissomphalus* was described by Ashmead (1893), the main diagnostic character for species in this genus was the tergal process. Evans (1954) named the ventral and dorsal laminae as ventral ramus and dorsal body. From Azevedo (1999a) until now, the complexity and variability observed in the genitalia of *Dissomphalus* have been used to classify species, because they are more precise in delimiting species compared to the tergal processes. Today, *Dissomphalus* species and some species-groups are diagnosed by particular features in the genitalia.

When *D. microstictus* Evans was described, the main diagnostic character used to identify this species was the second metasomal segment with “a pair of widely spaced very small pits with raised rims, these pits in very shallow, broad depression and flanked by a few setae” (see Evans 1969). Evans, however, did not mention any feature of the genitalia. Azevedo (1999b) reanalyzed the holotype and described the male genitalia of *D. microstictus* adding to its diagnostic features the latero-apical filament of the ventral ramus of the aedeagus, which was unique among *Dissomphalus* species known at that time.

While analyzing specimens previously identified as *D. microstictus*, we perceived some structural variations mainly in the dorsal body of the genitalia, which are important to report. After investigating this variation, we came to the conclusion that multiple species were masquerading as *D. microstictus*. We described 13 new species and defined the *microstictus* species-group based on the presence of the latero-apical filament of the ventral ramus of aedeagus.

Material and methods

Material examined: This study is based on examination of Neotropical specimens from the following institu-