A new Neotropical genus of Blastini (Psocodea: 'Pscoptera': Psocidae: Amphigerontiinae)

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Abstract

A monotypic genus of Psocidae (Amphigerontiinae: Blastini) from Santiago de Cali, Colombia, is here described and illustrated. It differs from Chaetopsocidus Badonnel, from the Paramo de Monserrate, near Bogotá, in having setae on the forewing veins.

Key words: Taxonomy, neotropics, Psocidae, Amphigerontiinae, Blastini, Colombia

Introduction

Recent explorations of the Neotropical fauna of pscopterans, have revealed a significant number of new taxa (García Aldrete & Mockford 2009; García Aldrete 2011; González Obando et al. 2013; Sarria et al. 2014), both at the generic and specific levels (García Aldrete et al. 2012; García Aldrete et al. 2014; Román-P et al. 2014). The subfamily Amphigerontiinae (Psocidae) is one of the most morphologically diverse, it includes 21 genera, mostly described from outside the Neotropical region. The Neotropical Psocidae appear to be quite rich, and examination of specimens in collections, or recently collected, often leaves us with doubts about the assignment of some specimens in the known genera, leading sometimes to the creation of new genera (cf., for example the recently described Elaphopsocoides Román et al., 2014).

The phylogenetic relationships of Amphigerontiinae have been discussed and are still subject of debate (Li 2002; Yoshizawa & Johnson 2008). Intuitive proposals (Li 2002) are subjective and likely to establish groups based on homoplastic characters, resulting from parallel and independent evolution, common in Psocidae, probably due, to its wide geographical distribution. Other methods, derived from phylogenetic approaches (Yoshizawa & Johnson 2008; Yoshizawa 2010; Yoshizawa et al. 2011) tend to be more objective, allowing the recognition of monophyletic groups supported by synapomorphic characters, therefore avoiding the formation of non-natural groups and improving the predictability of the phylogenetic proposal.

Although the division of Amphigerontiinae into the tribes Amphigerontini and Blastini has been proposed by both of the above currents (Li 2002; Yoshizawa & Johnson 2008; Yoshizawa 2010), it is still uncertain the phyletic condition of Amphigerontini, and more work is required to discern its status. The tribe Blastini is more stable to phylogenetic considerations, and is usually regarded as a monophyletic lineage. In this paper, we describe a new monotypic genus of Amphigerontiinae, tribe Blastini, found in southwestern Colombia, which we were unable to assign in any of the known genera of Blastini.