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## Revision of *Ascra* with proposition of the bifida species group and description of two new species (Hemiptera: Pentatomidae: Edessinae)

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### Abstract

*Edessa* is comprised of six subgenera, *Aceratodes*, *Ascra*, *Dorypleura*, *Edessa*, *Hypoxys* and *Pygoda*. *Ascra* is here elevated to genus status based on characteristics of the male and female genitalia and the gibbous pronotum. This genus is comprised of eight species previously placed in *Edessa*—*E. bifida*, *E. cordifera*, *E. petersii*, *E. abdita*, *E. championi*, *E. privata*, *E. conspersa* and *E. morbosus*, as well as six new species. The genus *Ascra* was further divided into two groups of species **bifida** and **privata** separated by a different pattern of punctuation on body and pygophore. Here we present only the **bifida** species group formed by *A. bifida*, *A. cordifera*, *A. petersii*, *A. abdita*, and *A. championi*, as well as two new species—*A. vluteum* and *A. flavoscutellata*. Lectotypes of *Aceratodes sigillatus*, *Edessa abdita*, *E. championi*, *E. cornuta*, *E. densata* and *E. petersii* are designated. *Aceratodes sigillatus*, *Edessa cornuta*, *E. densata*, *E. picata*, and *E. florida* are considered junior synonyms of *A. bifida*. Interestingly, some species of this genus are considered edible in Mexico.

**Key words:** Neotropical region, *Ascra*, *Edessa*, edible insects, systematics, synonym, new combination

### Introduction

Edessinae is a monophyletic taxon (Barcellos & Grazia 2003) considering the composition of taxa regularly accepted by most authors (Stål 1872; Kirkaldy 1909; Rolston & McDonald 1979; Fernandes & van Doesburg 2000; Barcellos & Grazia 2003). Fernandes (2010) and Silva *et al.* (2013) added genera to Edessinae raising the number of genera to seven: *Edessa* Fabricius, 1803; *Brachystethus* Laporte, 1832; *Peromatus* Amyot & Serville, 1843; *Olbia* Stål, 1862; *Pantochlora* Stål, 1870, *Doesburgedessa* Fernandes, 2010 and *Paraedessa* Silva & Fernandes, 2013. However, this composition is not universally accepted and Rider's classification (2009—Pentatomoidea home page) including six additional genera: *Lopadusa* Stål, 1860, *Pharnus* Stål, 1867; *Neopharnus* Van Duzee, 1910; *Praepharnus* Barber & Bruner, 1932; *Mediocampus* Thomas, 1994; *Platistocoris* Rider, 1998.

After description of *Edessa* by Fabricius (1803) several authors added or removed species from this genus. Amyot & Serville (1843) were the first authors to recognize a high level group named “Edessidés” for *Edessa*, *Brachystethus* Laporte, 1832 and five new genera based in species previously placed in *Edessa* (*Aceratodes*, *Dorypleura*, *Hypoxys*, *Peromatus* and *Pygoda*). Dallas (1851) considered *Dorypleura*, *Hypoxys* and *Pygoda* synonyms of *Edessa*, keeping in Edessidae the remaining genera. Stål (1872) considered as junior synonyms of *Edessa*: *Aceratodes* and *Ascra*—originally proposed by Say as a subgenus of *Pentatoma*. Stål used all these synonyms to name certain steps of the key as groups of species inside *Edessa*. In the same paper, Stål included in group **Ascra** three species (*Edessa albicors* Stål, 1872, *Edessa bifida* (Say, 1832) and *Edessa corculum* Erichson, 1848. In another close step he included *Edessa conspersa* Stål, 1872 and *Edessa westringii* Stål, 1872, and *Edessa mexicana* Stål, 1872, *Edessa picticornis* Stål, 1872, *Edessa punctiventris* Stål, 1872. Distant (1881) grouped most of these species—including **Ascra** and **Aceratodes**—based in the apical angles of last abdominal segment not acutely produced. These groups of species proposed by Stål have fallen into disuse until Kirkaldy (1909) consider