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A remarkable new species of the digger wasp genus *Zanysson* Rohwer 1921 from Colombia (Hymenoptera: Apoidea, Crabronidae)

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Abstract

Zanysson gemmatus **sp. nov.** (Hymenoptera: Apoidea, Crabronidae) is described from northwestern Colombia and compared with all species currently assigned to this genus. It is the first new species in this strictly New World genus recognized since 1938 and the first recorded from Colombia. The new species can be identified by the remarkable scutellar structure and pattern of color and pilosity of the legs. Nothing is known about its biology, but members of *Zanysson* are assumed to be cleptoparasites of other crabronid wasps.

Key words: *Zanysson*, Apoidea, Crabronidae, Bembicinae, Nyssonini, digger wasp, sand wasp, cleptoparasitism, brood parasitism, *Tachytes*, Colombia, new species, taxonomy

Introduction

Most species of the crabronid subfamily Bembicinae build and provision their nests in the ground and, hence, are frequently called 'sand wasps' (Evans 1966). A remarkable exception are the Nyssonini, which are cleptoparasites of other apoid wasps. The adult female searches and enters the nests of its hosts and uses the provisions provided for the hosts' offspring for its own eggs (Bohart & Menke 1976; O'Neill 2001). Generally, cleptoparasitism can be understood as the theft of a resource, usually larval food and nest, from another individual, and therefore the Nyssonini are more precisely described as brood parasites (O'Neill 2001).

Within the Nyssonini, Bohart and Menke (1976) list 18 genera, comprising 216 species world-wide. Only two of these genera are known from both the New and the Old World, whereas 11 genera seem to be restricted to the New World. Among these, *Zanysson* represents a relatively derived genus, which is still poorly understood. Some interesting observations imply that the species of *Zanysson* are cleptoparasites of other crabronid wasps like *Tachytes* Panzer (Crabroninae) (Evans 1966; Bohart & Menke 1976). Currently, seventeen species and one subspecies are recognized (Bohart & Menke 1976; Pulawski 2006b): *Zanysson argentinus* (Brèthes 1913), Argentina; *armatus* (Cresson 1865), Cuba; *changuina* Pate 1938, Costa Rica, Panama; *croesus* (Handlirsch 1895), Brazil; *dives* (Handlirsch 1887), Mexico, Trinidad; *fasciatus* (Olivier 1812), South America; *foveiscutis* (Gerstaecker 1868), Brazil; *gayi* (Spinola 1851), Argentina, Chile; *luteipennis* (Gerstaecker 1868), Brazil; *luxuriosus* (Schrottky 1910), Argentina; *macuxi* Pate 1938, Brazil; *marginatus* (Spinola 1841), French Guiana; *mexicanus* (Cresson 1882), Mexico; *pilosus* (Smith 1873), Brazil; *plesius* (Rohwer 1921), USA; *texanus* (Cresson 1873), USA; *texanus fuscipes* (Cresson 1882), USA; *varipilosellus* (Cameron 1912), Guyana.

Most of these species were originally placed in the genus *Nysson* or, in some cases, in *Paranysson*. Rohwer (1921) was the first to separate some North American species of *Nysson* by introducing the new genus-group name *Zanysson*. He distinguished its members from all other *Nysson* by their bilobed metanotum

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