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Endemic insects from the Yungas of Argentina

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Abstract

Until now, biogeographic unit of the Yungas was almost exclusively characterized by its floristic taxa. Presence of other taxonomical groups, in this case arthropods, were poorly recorded besides implicit mention of arthropods to characterizeYungas as a natural region. We present herein a species checklist of the holometabolous insects considered as endemics of the Yungas in Argentina. This checklist is a result of a rigorous endemicity analysis (Navarro *et al*, en prep.) Comments about altitudinal gradients of distribution for these endemic species are made. Results reveal a total of 23 endemic insects species of Yungas, representing 13 families of Lepidoptera, Diptera and Hymenoptera.

Keywords: endemism, montane forest, biogeography, Argentina

Resumen

Hasta el presente, la unidad biogeográfica de las Yungas ha sido caracterizada casi exclusivamente por sus componentes florísticos. La presencia de otros grupos taxonómicos, como los artrópodos, para caracterizar a las Yungas como una región natural ha sido pobremente documentada a pesar de alguna mención implícita y esporádica de especies de artrópodos. Nuestro objetivo es brindar una lista de especies de insectos holometábolos endémicas de las Yungas de la Argentina, resultado de un análisis de endemicidad riguroso (Navarro *et al*, en prep.). Comentarios sobre la distribución altitudinal de estas especies son realizados. Los resultados revelan la existencia de 23 especies de insectos endémicas de Yungas repartidas en 13 familias de Lepidoptera, Diptera e Hymenoptera.

Palabras clave: endemismo, selva montana, biogeografía, Argentina

Introduction

The recognition of endemic species (those that are found in a specific place and nowhere else) is important not only in terms of conservation and management of the biodiversity, but also from a biogeographical point of view, allowing characterization of a particular biogeographical region. On the other hand, rich areas of endemism can be active places of speciation or refuges of ancient species. Judging by the recent available literature, insects were been rarely taken into account at the moment of characterizing biomes or biogeographical regions, except for some sporadic references or citing species registered only from its type locality.

Montane forests are very important as repositories of biodiversity and as a result are increasingly important for tourism and recreation as well as hunting and fishing. Because mountain forests are usually isolated from similar ecosystems by steep terrain and intervening lowlands with contrasting climates, they are fre-

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