



Chewing lice (Phthiraptera) from buntings, cardinals and tanagers (Passeriformes: Emberizidae, Cardinalidae, Thraupidae) from Costa Rica, with descriptions of two new species of the genus *Myrsidea* (Phthiraptera: Menoponidae)

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Abstract

Descriptions and illustrations are given for two new species of *Myrsidea* Waterston, 1915 from cardinals and tanagers from Costa Rica. They and their type hosts are: *Myrsidea poliogasteri* ex *Caryothraustes poliogaster* (Cardinalidae) and *M. larvatae* ex *Tangara larvata* (Thraupidae). The male of *Myrsidea mitrospingi* is also described. New host records are *Sporophila corvina* for *Ricinus diffusus*; *Mitrospingus cassinii* for *Menacanthus eurysternus*; *Tachyphonus luctuosus* for *Myrsidea spizae*; *Euphonia gouldi* for *Myrsidea violaceae*; and *Tachyphonus delatirii* for *Machaerilaemus laticorpus*. Records of two other louse species of the genus *Myrsidea* from tanagers are also discussed. This paper includes the first record of *Myrsidea* from members of the passerine family Cardinalidae, and a number of additional new host-louse associations.

Key words: *Myrsidea*, *Menacanthus*, *Machaerilaemus*, *Ricinus*, new host-louse associations

Introduction

Buntings (Emberizidae), cardinals (Cardinalidae) and tanagers (Thraupidae and the ensuing “*Genera Incertae Sedis*”) are among the most speciose families within the Passeriformes (Dickinson 2003). Of the 623 known species within these passerine families, 103 species occur in Costa Rica (Stiles and Skutch 1989). Data concerning the chewing lice of these Costa Rican birds are scarce. To date, only nine species of chewing lice from nine host species have been reported (Carriker 1903; Nelson 1972; Price 1975; Cicchino 1983; Price *et al.* 2002; Price and Dalglish 2006). In addition to the species listed by Price *et al.* (2003), 31 new species of *Myrsidea* Waterston, 1915 from Thraupidae and Emberizidae have been described, nine of these 31 species have been from Costa Rica (Price & Dalglish 2006, 2007). It should be noted that Price *et al.* (2003) followed the avian classification scheme of Howard & Moore (1991) and, by doing so, included species now recognized as members of the Thraupidae and Cardinalidae within the Emberizidae. The aim of this paper is to present new data on the composition and distribution of species of chewing lice found on buntings, cardinals and tanagers in Costa Rica, including descriptions of two new species.