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Description of three females of the genus *Acanthagrion* (Odonata: Coenagrionidae) with a key to the females of Argentina

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Abstract

The neotropical genus *Acanthagrion* Selys (Odonata: Coenagrionidae) is composed of 44 species, of which the females of 31 species are currently known. In this contribution the females of *A. aepiolum* Tennessen and *A. minutum* Leonard are described and that of *A. ascendens* Calvert is redescribed. Distribution maps and new records are provided for all three species. Finally, a key to females of the genus *Acanthagrion* from Argentina is provided.

Key words: *Acanthagrion*, damselfly, Neotropical region

Resumen

El género neotropical *Acanthagrion* Selys (Odonata: Coenagrionidae) contiene 44 especies de las cuales se conocen las hembras de 31 especies. En esta contribución se describen las hembras de *A. aepiolum* Tennessen y *A. minutum* Leonard, y se redescribe la hembra de *A. ascendens* Calvert. Se proveen además mapas de distribución y nuevos registros para todas ellas. Por último, se brinda una clave para las hembras del género *Acanthagrion* presentes en Argentina.

Introduction

The neotropical genus *Acanthagrion* was erected in 1876 by Baron Edmond Selys Longchamps to include nine species of Coenagrionidae. Currently it includes 44 small to medium species which are distributed from Texas (USA) to Buenos Aires (Argentina) (Garrison *et al.* 2010; Machado 2012). This genus can be diagnosed by wings hyaline with CuP of Hw reaching hind margin of wing (except in *A. minutum*); flexure of genital ligula short; lateral lobes of genital ligula, when present, distal to flexure; cerci slanting from base (forming an angle of 45° with posterior margin of S10) and with a basal tubercle (absent only in *A. taxaense* whose generic placement is formerly being reconsidered, Anjos-Santos & Lozano in press). Females lack a well-defined mesepisternal carina between mesostigmal plates and middorsal carina, and generally have mesepisternal fossae on the dorsum of the pterothorax and a vulvar spine on S8 (von Ellenrieder & Lozano 2008; Garrison *et al.* 2010). The knowledge of the females is incomplete, with 31 females described to date (70.5%).

In Argentina the genus *Acanthagrion* is represented by eight species: *A. aepiolum* Tennessen, *A. cuyabae* Calvert, *A. floridense* Fraser, *A. gracile* (Rambur), *A. hildegarda* Gloger, *A. lancea* Selys, *A. minutum* Leonard and *A. temporale* Selys (von Ellenrieder & Muzón 2008). Of these, only the females of *A. aepiolum* and *A. minutum* have not been described yet.

The specific status of *A. ascendens* Calvert has been misinterpreted for approximately 50 years. Calvert (1909) described *A. ascendens* based on Brazilian specimens. Rácenis (1958) described the male and female of *A. luteum* based on specimens collected in Venezuela and Surinam; as both species (*A. ascendens* and *A. luteum*) were very