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Ten new species from the Patagonian Andes (Argentina and Chile), mostly belonging to a newly designated *Stigmella purpurimaculae* group (Lepidoptera: Nepticulidae)

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Abstract

Ten new *Stigmella* Schrank species are described: *Stigmella purpurimaculae* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. cana* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. truncata* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. sceptrata* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. concreta* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. pseudoconcreta* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. quadrata* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.** (all belonging to the newly designated *S. purpurimaculae* group), and *S. semilactea* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. brutea* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.**, *S. pseudodigitata* Remeikis & Stonis, **sp. nov.** (not attributed to a species group) are described from the Andes (Patagonia: Argentina and Chile). For the species of the *purpurimaculae* group, a partial reduction of phallus, dentate cornuti, and strong development of utriculus (which can be equal or longer of the corpus bursae) are characteristic. Some of the species of the *purpurimaculae* group were collected near *Nothofagus pumilio* (Poepp. & Endl.) Krasser, Nothofagaceae, but there is still no confirmation that *Nothofagus* is a host-plant. All new *Stigmella* species are illustrated with photographs and drawings of the adults and genitalia.

Key words: the Andes, Nepticulidae, new species, Patagonia, the *purpurimaculae* group, *Stigmella*

Introduction

Nepticulidae are a very distinct, isolated family of primitive monotrystian Microlepidoptera with a global distribution. Only the European nepticulid fauna can be considered to have been more or less thoroughly studied (van Nieukerken 1985, 1990, 2007; Johansson *et al.* 1990; Puplesis 1994; van Nieukerken & Johansson 2003; Laštuvka & Laštuvka 1998, 2009; van Nieukerken *et al.* 2010; Laštuvka *et al.* 2013, etc.). Studies in other regions of the world are much less complete in reflecting the actual diversity of the group, although general coverage compares well with some other groups of Microlepidoptera.

The Neotropical region, while vast and with a hugely diverse biota, is comparatively unexplored with respect to the collection and study of Nepticulidae. The first two species recorded from the region, *Stigmella johannis* and *Fomoria molybditis*, were described by Zeller (1877) (as *Nepticula*) from Colombian material collected by Johann and Nolcken in 1871. Much later, five additional species were reported from Peru and two from Guyana by Meyrick (1915); however, one of the Guyanese species (*Enteucha cyanochlora*) was placed in the Lyonetiidae and only recognized as nepticulid some 70 years later (Davis 1984, 1985). Until the first monographic review of the known Neotropical fauna with the documentation of 37 new taxa from Belize, Peru and Argentina by Puplesis & Robinson (2000) there have been practically no investigations of Neotropical Nepticulidae, except for isolated descriptions of a few new species from Puerto Rico (Forbes & Leonard 1930) and Argentina (Meyrick 1931; Bourquin 1962) and a few relatively recent discoveries in Florida (Davis 1978; Wilkinson 1981) of species with Neotropical affinities. *Stigmella plumosetaeella* was described by Newton & Wilkinson (1982) from Arizona, USA, and Puplesis & Robinson (2000) later recorded the species from southwestern Mexico. In Puplesis &

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