

New combinations and synonymies of leafcutter and mason bees of the Americas (*Megachile*, Hymenoptera, Megachilidae)

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Abstract

The taxonomic positions of 284 names on the genus *Megachile* (*sensu* Michener et al. 1994) of the Americas are clarified. A total of 166 types (164 holotypes and 2 cotypes) were examined. In 24 cases specimens determined by specialists were used and in 17 the published descriptions were analysed. The subgenera of 175 species are indicated for the first time and 94 are nomenclatural changes. Four lectotypes are designated. There are 11 new synonyms: *brasiliensis* Dalla Torre 1896 (= *nigradorsis* Vachal 1908 = *brancoensis* Mitchell 1930), *eburneipes* Vachal 1904 (= *bernardina* Schrottky 1913), *fiebrigi* Schrottky 1908 (= *tergina* Vachal 1908), *guaranitica* Schrottky 1908 (= *marcida* Vachal 1908), *maura* Cresson 1865 (= *carlotensis* Mitchell 1927), *nigripennis* Spinola 1841 (= *hypocrita* Smith 1853 = *totonaca* Cresson 1878), *nudiventris* Smith 1853 (= *jurujubensis* Cockerell 1927) *pedalis* Fox 1891 (= *liguanensis* Cockerell 1912) and *poeyi* Guérin-Ménéville 1845 (= *velhoensis* Mitchell 1930). One is a change of specific name: *moderata* Smith 1879 (= *mariannae* Dalla Torre 1896) and one of subgenus: *Moureapis* new name (= *Moureana* Mitchell 1980 = *Willinkella* Laroca et al 1982 = *Acentrina* Schlindwein 1995). Two have changed to a new status: *poeyi alleni* Mitchell 1927 to *alleni* Mitchell and *hoffmanseggiae* var. *hypoleuca* Cockerell 1927 to *hypoleuca* Cockerell.

Key words: *Megachile*; catalogue; subgenera; Americas

Introduction

Members of the genus *Megachile* are leafcutter and mason bees. They are found throughout the Americas and are important pollinators of many crops and other useful plants, including trees. Despite their economic and ecological importance, difficulties in their identification have deterred field studies and the biology of few species is known.