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Revision of the *Amphibolips* species of Mexico excluding the “niger complex” Kinsey (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae), with description of seven new species

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Abstract

The species of *Amphibolips* Reinhard 1865 (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae: Cynipini) of Mexico not included in the “niger complex” Kinsey 1937 are revised. The “nassa complex” recently created by Melika *et al.* (2011) for these species is questioned. As a result of faunistic surveys of oak gall wasps in Mexico, seven new species of *Amphibolips* are described: *Amphibolips durangensis* Nieves-Aldrey & Maldonado, *A. malinche* Nieves-Aldrey & Pascual, *A. jaliscensis* Nieves-Aldrey & Pascual, *A. oaxaca* Nieves-Aldrey & Pascual, *A. nevadensis* Nieves-Aldrey & Pascual, *A. tarasco* Nieves-Aldrey & Pascual and *A. michoacaensis* Nieves-Aldrey & Maldonado. The types of *A. dampfi* Kinsey 1937, *A. nebris* Kinsey 1937 and *A. fusus* Kinsey 1937 are revised, redescribed and compared with the new species described herein. A new key for the identification of adults of all species not included in the “niger complex” from Mexico, including the related species *A. castroviejo* Medianero & Nieves-Aldrey and *A. aliciae* Medianero & Nieves-Aldrey from Panama, is presented. Diagnostic characters, distribution data, host plants and species biology are provided for of all of the studied species. The richness and distribution of *Amphibolips* in Mexico and the Neotropical region, their known biological data, and the taxonomic limits of this genus are also discussed.

Key words: Cynipidae, oak gall wasps, *Quercus*, Mexico

Introduction

The cynipids of the tribe Cynipini (Hymenoptera: Cynipidae), known as the oak gall wasps, form the largest group of gall wasps, including more than 1000 described species, all of which are gall inducers exclusively on plants of the Fagaceae family (Nieves-Aldrey 2001; Liljeblad *et al.* 2008). The oak gall wasp fauna of Mexico has not been well studied and remains poorly known. However, it is estimated that this fauna is potentially very rich because of the great diversity of their host *Quercus* species, 161 species of which are found in México, including 109 endemic species (Valencia-A 2004). A recent inventory of the Cynipidae of Mexico recorded 157 cynipid species (Pujade-Villar *et al.* 2009). However, more recent and ongoing studies on Mexican oak gall wasps are rapidly increasing the number of recorded species.

Amphibolips Reinhard 1865 is a distinctive genus of oak gall wasps (Cynipidae: Cynipini) recorded as being confined to America. The known range of this genus, which was assumed to extend only in the Nearctic, was recently enlarged to the Neotropical region, with three species described from Panama (Medianero & Nieves Aldrey 2010).

At present, forty-five species are known throughout the distribution area of this genus, extending from Canada to Panama. There are 42 species recorded in the Nearctic region, and three are known from Panama: *A. castroviejo* Medianero & Nieves-Aldrey, *A. aliciae* Medianero & Nieves-Aldrey and *A. salicifoliae* Medianero & Nieves-Aldrey (Medianero & Nieves-Aldrey 2010). Of the 42 Nearctic species, 30 have been recorded from the USA and Canada,