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A new species of *Megarhyssa* Ashmead (Hymenoptera: Ichneumonidae: Rhyssinae) from tropical Mexico with a key to Mexican species

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Abstract

A new species of ichneumon wasp, *Megarhyssa gratiosa* **sp. nov.**, is described from Chiapas province in the tropical part of Mexico. This is a southern most record of the genus in the New World. The new species is one of the largest and most spectacular ichneumonid species in the Mexican fauna. *Megarhyssa gratiosa* **sp. nov.** differs from its North American congeners primarily by the conspicuous colour pattern of the metasoma which is yellow with broad dorsal black stripe extending along its entire length, and the longer ovipositor. A key to three Mexican species of *Megarhyssa* is also provided.

Key words: Chiapas, Neotropical region, taxonomy

Resumen

Se describe una nueva especie de ichneumónido, *Megarhyssa gratiosa* **sp. nov.**, del Estado de Chiapas, el cual está situado en la porción tropical de México. Este es el registro más meridional del género en el Nuevo Mundo. La nueva especie es una de las especies de ichneumónidos de mayor tamaño en la fauna mexicana. *Megarhyssa gratiosa* **sp. nov.** difiere de sus congéneres de Norteamérica principalmente en el patrón de color del metasoma, el cual es amarillo con una línea dorsal negra que se extiende en toda su longitud, y en su ovipositor, el cual es más largo. Se presenta una clave para las tres especies de *Megarhyssa* presentes en México.

Palabras clave: Chiapas, región Neotropical, taxonomía

Introduction

Rhyssinae is a worldwide subfamily comprising eight genera with about 240 species (Yu *et al.* 2012). Previously the subfamily was considered as a tribe within the Pimplinae (Townes & Townes 1960; Townes 1969), but later it was treated as a separate subfamily (Gauld 1991; Wahl & Gauld 1998). Some members of the subfamily, especially species of *Megarhyssa*, are the largest and most spectacular among the Ichneumonidae, with body with variable amount of yellow, red and black, and body length (including ovipositor) up to 150 mm.

The genus *Megarhyssa* Ashmead comprises 36 species occurring predominantly in the Holarctic and Oriental regions (Yu *et al.* 2012), and is most species rich in East and South Asia (Kasparyan 2002). Four species of *Megarhyssa* occur in the U.S.A. and Canada, and only one of them, *M. macrura* (L.), has been recorded from northern Mexico (Chihuahua province) (Townes & Townes 1960). Another species, *M. verae* Kasparyan, has been described from a single female from the State of Mexico in Central Mexico (Kasparyan 2002). In Mexico this genus is very rarely collected, but in the U.S.A. and Canada it seems to be more abundant in forests.

Megarhyssa are known as idiobiont ectoparasitoids of the concealed larvae of Siricidae (Hymenoptera) and occasionally beetles (Coleoptera) on deciduous and sometimes on coniferous trees (Townes 1969; Kasparyan 2002).