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A new name for *Myrmecodesmus potosinus* (Shear) 1973, a homonym of *Myrmecodesmus potosinus* (Chamberlin) 1943 (Diplopoda, Polydesmida, Pyrgodesmidae)

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The genus *Myrmecodesmus* was created by Silvestri (1910) to accommodate a small, myrmecophilous polydesmid from central Veracruz. It includes mainly fossorial species and several forms have been collected in caves or associated with ant nests (Silvestri 1911; Shear 1977). Silvestri (1911) described a second species in this genus from the same locality. During subsequent decades several new genera were created as new pyrgodesmid species were described from Mexico, but *Myrmecodesmus* included only two species until Hoffman (1973) proposed a synonymy with *Ilyma* Chamberlin, 1941, increasing to seven the number of species referable to *Myrmecodesmus*. By this time the characters traditionally used to define genera in this family (mostly pore presence and distribution, presence of ozophores, number of segments and ornamentation) started to be questioned (Hoffman 1973; Shear 1973). Finally, a partial taxonomic revision of Pyrgodesmidae from Mexico (Shear 1977) drastically simplified the generic composition of this family and up to 11 genera were introduced into the synonymy of *Myrmecodesmus*. Including the new combinations, Shear (1977) listed a total of 25 species under this genus, but he missed including a few. This was partly corrected by Hoffman (1999), raising the number to 28 species. However, both authors missed an additional species that implies some nomenclatural issues.

Chamberlin (1943) named several new pyrgodesmid species, many of them in genera later synonymized with *Myrmecodesmus*. Among them is *Ilyma potosina*, described on the basis of a single incomplete female from Los Platanitos, San Luis Potosi, Mexico (Fig. 1). As mentioned above, the genus *Ilyma* was synonymized with *Myrmecodesmus* by Hoffman (1973). The specific epithet is not a noun in apposition but an adjective meaning “from Potosi”. The proper combination for this species is *Myrmecodesmus potosinus* (Chamberlin, 1943) new combination.

Bolivaresmus potosinus was described by Shear (1973) based on a male and a female form “Cueva de la Perra” (probably a misspelling of Cueva de la Porra), 3 miles north of Xilitla, also in San Luis Potosi (Fig. 1), and was later transferred by Shear (1977) to the genus *Myrmecodesmus* as *Myrmecodesmus potosinus* (Shear 1973), becoming a secondary junior homonym of the species previously named by Chamberlin.

A similar issue had already occurred in this group after the synonymies of *Ceratesmus clarus* Chamberlin, 1942 and *Orthyma clara* Chamberlin, 1943 under *Myrmecodesmus*, and was solved by renaming the latter species as *Myrmecodesmus chamberlini* Shear, 1977.

To resolve the observed homonymy a new name is proposed for *Myrmecodesmus potosinus* (Shear, 1973):

***Myrmecodesmus sheari*, new name**

Synonymies:

Myrmecodesmus potosinus, Shear 1977, p. 255.

Bolivaresmus potosinus, Shear 1973, p. 300.

Etymology. The new name is in honour to Dr. William A. Shear, for his great contribution to our knowledge of Diplopoda and to this polydesmid group in particular.

Thus, the current number of *Myrmecodesmus* species present in North America and northern Central America is set at 30, including the latest described species, *M. reddelli* Shelley, 2004. They are distributed from Belize and Chiapas in the south, extending north along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico as far as Florida (Hoffman 1999; Bueno-Villegas et al.

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