

Revision of the genus *Ambracius* Stål, 1860 (Heteroptera: Miridae: Deraeocorinae: Clivinematinii), with descriptions of three new species

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Abstract

The clivinematinii genus *Ambracius* Stål is revised and the three new species *Ambracius alineae* from Venezuela, *A. liviae* from the United States (Texas), and *A. rudybuenoi* from Panama are described and illustrated. The previously known species *Ambracius capucinus* (Reuter), *A. dufouri* Stål, *A. mexicanus* Carvalho, *A. pallescens* (Distant), *A. rubricosus* (Distant), and *A. vittatus* Carvalho are redescribed. A key to species is provided to aid in identification.

Key words: Miridae, taxonomy, Deraeocorinae, Clivinematinii, *Ambracius*, new species, distributions, hosts, key

Prior to this study, only six species of the clivinematinii genus *Ambracius* were recognized. *Ambracius capucinus* (Reuter, 1905) was described from Venezuela; *A. dufouri* Stål, 1860 (type species), from Brazil; *A. mexicanus* Carvalho, 1984, from Mexico; *A. pallescens* (Distant, 1884), from Guatemala; *A. rubricosus* (Distant, 1884), from Guatemala; and *A. vittatus* Carvalho, 1984, from Brazil. The numerous color forms of *A. dufouri* have resulted in four synonyms (Carvalho 1952b, 1954). Subsequently, Carvalho (1955b) transferred *A. harrisi* Carvalho, 1951b to *Clivinema* Reuter and synonymized it with *C. regalis* Knight, 1917; Carvalho (1981) synonymized *Fundanius albomaculatus* Distant, 1884, with *A. pallescens* Distant, 1884; and Ferreira (1996) resurrected *A. rubricosus* from synonymy under *A. dufouri*, based on study of the male genitalia.

Ferreira (1998), in his cladistic analysis of the Clivinematinii, provided notes on distribution and feeding habits, and indicated that *Ambracius* and *Guanabarea* Carvalho are sister genera. Ferreira (2000) provided a generic key and Ferreira (2001) diagnosed and redescribed the known genera, including *Ambracius*.

Little information is available on the feeding habits of the species of *Ambracius*. Most Deraeocorinae, including all members of Clivinematinii, are considered predatory (Ferreira, 1998; Wheeler, 2000, 2001), feeding on a wide array of arthropods. Although feeding observations for clivinematinii are scant, they are thought to be the only Miridae restricted to preying on Ortheziidae, commonly called ensign scales (Wheeler 2001). Knight (1928) reported *Clivinema sericea* Knight feeding on *Orthezia* sp. in New Mexico, and Miller and Schuh (1994) documented adults and nymphs of *C. coalinga* Bliven feeding on *Orthezia annae* Cockerell in California. Ferreira (1998) and Henry (pers. observ., 2000) observed adults and nymphs of *Ambracius dufouri* feeding on ensign scales in Brazil, and Ferreira and Schaffner (in Ferreira, 1998) observed *Hemicerocoris bicolor* Carvalho attacking soft scales on guava and orange in Mexico.

In this paper, we describe and illustrate the new species *Ambracius alineae* from Venezuela, *A. liviae* from the United States (Texas), and *A. rudybuenoi* from Panama, and diagnose and redescribe *A. capucinus* (Reuter), *A. dufouri* Stål, *A. mexicanus* Carvalho, *A. pallescens* (Distant), *A. rubricosus* (Distant), and *A. vittatus* Carvalho. A key to the nine known species is provided to aid in identification.