ON THE IDENTITY OF HALICTUS CUBENSIS SPINOLA, 1851 (HYMENOPTERA: HALICTIDAE)

Michael S. Engel

Some time ago Dr. Julio A. Genaro inquired if I might be able to determine the proper identity of the species known as Halictus cubensis Spinola, 1851 which was described from a male and female from Havana, Cuba. Unfortunately, Spinola (1851, p. 203) only mentioned the species in passing, proposing it rather cavalierly as a note under his treatment of H. chloris Spinola, 1851 (today Corynura chloris) and principally referring to the position of particular wing veins. Thus, although the name was made available, the real identity of the species has remained undetermined for over 150 years. Indeed, in the catalog of Western Hemisphere halictids, Moure and Hurd (1987, p. 206) rightly left H. cubensis as Halictini incertae sedis.

Through the kindness of Dr. Guido Pagliano I have recently had the opportunity to examine the male and female upon which Spinola based his brief description of H. cubensis. I have found that the female is a specimen of Augochlora regina Smith, 1853 (Augochlorini: Augochlorina), while the male is Agaposmon viridulus (Fabricius, 1793) (Caenohalictini: Agapostemonina). Both species are already relatively well characterized and I therefore do not believe it necessary to provide lengthy redescriptions of them herein. However, for the purpose of nomenclatorial stability I have provided the necessary taxonomic summaries for both species, designated a lectotype for H. cubensis, and indicated the necessary new synonymy that the lectotype designation precipitates (infra). Both of Spinola's specimens are now labeled with their appropriate identities and the male with a lectotype label as indicated.

SYSTEMATIC ENTOMOLOGY

Tribe Augochlorini Beebe
Genus Augochlora Smith

Augochlora (Augochlora) regina Smith

Augochlora regina Smith, 1853: 77.

Tribe Caenohalictini Michener
Genus Agapostemon Guérin-Méneville
Agapostemon (Agapostemon) viridulus (Fabricius)

Apis viridula Fabricius, 1793: 342.

Halictus cubensis Spinola, 1851: 203. new synonym
Agapostemon semiviridis Cresson, 1865: 172.


Comments. Although I could have selected Spinola's female as the lectotype, A. regina has been more widely used in the literature, albeit still rather uncommonly, than A. viridulus. Furthermore, of these two names in current usage only A. viridulus is older than H. cubensis. Selection of the male as the name-bearing type for the latter renders the epithet a junior synonym of the former, preserving current usage and eliminating the long unused name. Since Spinola's description applies equally to his male and female specimens and he refers to both, either is eligible to serve as the name-bearing type of H. cubensis. I believe my selection does the most to promote nomenclatorial stability.

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LITERATURE CITED


