

Fam. ANTHRIBIDÆ *.

Judging from the great number of new genera and species which are constantly being discovered, we know only a small percentage of the Anthribidæ actually in existence. With some exceptions, the species are not found in large numbers of individuals, owing to their habits and, to no less extent, to their great resemblance to the bark of trees on which they occur. The present treatise offers an illustration of the great increase in the number of known species of Anthribidæ when a tropical district has been more exhaustively examined. Hardly three dozen forms were known from Central America, while the material now before me comprises close on 200 species. That these do not fully represent the Anthribid fauna of Central America is abundantly evident from the high percentage of species found only in single specimens. The material from Mexico and Costa Rica is especially meagre, Guatemala and Chiriqui being the best explored districts, having yielded by far the larger number of species here enumerated. The erection of new genera has been restricted as far as it was possible to do so without obscuring the generic division of the family. The number of forms common to Central and South America is very small. However, it is hardly possible to obtain at present a correct idea of the distribution of the various species, nor is the material extensive enough for a study of the geographical variability of these insects. These are questions which can be fruitfully entered into only when we know more Anthribids and are better acquainted with them. As regards the classification of the family we are likewise suffering from a lack of sufficient material. The exposition of it given by Lacordaire in his admirable work 'Genera des Coléoptères,' vii. (1866), is naturally somewhat antiquated, the division into small groups of genera as therein given, moreover, not being tenable. The main division of the Anthribidæ into two subfamilies, however, is, in my opinion, quite correct, the Pleurocerinæ, with a lateral antennal groove, being well distinguished from the Anocerinæ, with a dorsal antennal groove. Though this grouping is natural, some care is necessary in drawing the line correctly. There are a number of Pleurocerinæ in which the upper edge of the antennal groove is not distinctly carinate, or in which this carinate edge is moved dorsad, the groove being open in dorsal aspect. These forms may easily be mistaken for Anocerinæ.

I have abstained at present from further dividing the Pleurocerinæ, which subfamily comprises the bulk of the family, into groups of genera—a difficult task, which must be postponed till we have collected sufficient facts to attempt a general classification

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