Systematics, Morphology and Biogeography

Taxonomic revision of *Plyomydas* Wilcox & Papavero, 1971 with the description of two new species and its transfer to Mydinae (Insecta: Diptera: Mydidae)

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**A B S T R A C T**

The monotypic Neotropical Mydidae genus *Plyomydas* Wilcox & Papavero, 1971, to date confined to coastal Peru, is reviewed. Two new species, *Plyomydas adelphi* sp. nov. and *Plyomydas phalaros* sp. nov., are described from mid-elevational western Argentina, which extends the distribution of the genus considerably. Distribution, occurrence in biodiversity hotspots sensu Conservation International, and seasonal incidence are discussed. Descriptions/re-descriptions, photographs, illustrations, and identification keys are provided and made openly accessible in data depositories to support future studies of the included taxa. *Plyomydas* is transferred from the Leptomydinae to the Mydinae: Messiasini based on the absence of acanthophorite spines on abdominal tergite 10 in females and the presence of vein M\textsubscript{3} + M\textsubscript{4} terminating in the costal vein C. Leptomydinae is therefore restricted to the Northern Hemisphere with the exception of *Hessemypoda* Kondratieff, Carr & Irwin, 2005 known from Madagascar. *Messasia notospila* (Wiedemann, 1828) is compared to *Plyomydas* species.

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**Introduction**

Mydidae flies are a conspicuous part of the Diptera fauna of South America. The largest known Mydidae, and possibly Diptera in general, is *Gauromydas heros* (Perty, 1833) from southern Brazil (see Wilcox and Papavero, 1971; Calhau et al., 2015). Several other species of this genus and species of *Protonymyas* Wilcox, Papavero & Pimentel, 1989 are also very large, but rarely observed in nature. The discovery of relatively large specimens of Mydidae from Argentina that do not fit the description of *Gauromydas* Wilcox, Papavero & Pimentel, 1989 or *Protonymyas* in several natural history collections initiated the present study.

There are some 476 Mydidae species known world-wide and the largest species and generic diversity is found in southern Africa (Dikow, in press). The Neotropical Region has currently some 85 species in 22 genera in six subfamily taxa (Papavero, 2009, see also Neotropical taxon catalog at asiloid flies web-site). Note that the Neotropical catalog by Papavero (2009) includes Nearctic taxa of Ectyphinae, Leptomydinae, and Rhaphionidae.

The Neotropical Leptomydinae include *Plyomydas* Wilcox & Papavero, 1971, a genus with a single species known from Peru, *Nemomydas* Curran, 1934 with eight central American species reaching as far south as Colombia, and possibly *Pseudonomoneura* Bequaert, 1961 in southern Mexico. In general, Leptomydinae is a Northern Hemisphere taxon with only *Hessemypoda* Kondratieff, Carr & Irwin, 2005 from Madagascar and *Plyomydas* from Peru penetrating the Southern Hemisphere.

The genus *Plyomydas* was described from a single species, *P. peruviensis* Wilcox & Papavero, 1971, occurring in coastal Peru (Wilcox and Papavero, 1971) and has not been studied further since. New material of this genus has been discovered in several natural history collections that extend the distribution of this taxon to the eastern Andes in western Argentina as well as low-elevation Paraguay. These flies are relatively large with a wing length between 15 and 21 mm, but are very rare in entomological collections as only 16 specimens (of a total of 29 *Plyomydas*) were located. In this review, we present a taxonomic revision of *Plyomydas* with the description of two new species from Argentina and the transfer of the genus to the Mydinae.

Almeida and Lamas (2014) record *Plyomydas* from Argentina for the first time by making reference to an undescribed species and provide a key to genera of Mydidae occurring in Argentina. The
specimen shown in Almeida and Lamas (2014, p. 425) is Plyomydas phalaros sp. nov. (MZSP-MZ003846).

Materials and methods

Morphological features were examined using an Olympus SZ60 and a Zeiss SteREO Discovery.V12 stereo microscope. Wing length is measured from the tegula to the distal tip of the wing. The female and male terminalia were first excised and macerated in 10% potassium hydroxide (KOH) at 55 °C followed by neutralization in acetic acid (glacial, CH3COOH) and rinsing in distilled water (H2O). They were temporarily stored in 75% ethanol (C2H5OH) for examination and illustration and eventually sealed in polyethylene vials containing 100% glycerine (C3H8O) and attached to the specimen’s pin.

Terminology


Species descriptions and re-descriptions

Species descriptions are based on composites of all specimens and not exclusively on the holotype and are compiled from a character matrix of 144 features and 179 character states assembled with Lucid Builder (version 3.5) and eventually exported as natural-language descriptions. These species descriptions have been deposited in the Zenodo data depository and can be accessed in XML-format following the SDD (Structure of Descriptive Data) standard. The structure of terminalia is only described once for the genus and additional species-specific features should be interpreted from the provided illustrations. All taxon names have been registered in ZooBank (Pyle and Michel, 2008). Previous taxon descriptions have been marked-up in TaxonX XML language (Catapano, 2010) and uploaded to the Plazi TreatmentBank from where they are accessible for human and machine reading.

Specimen occurrence data

The following data on species occurrences are given (where available): country, state/province, county, locality, geographic co-ordinates (formatted in both degrees minutes seconds and decimal latitude/longitude), elevation (in meters), date of collection (format: yyyy-mm-dd), habitat information, sampling protocol (if other than hand netting), collector, catalog number (a unique specimen number and any other identifying number), depository (institution and collection code), number of specimens, sex, life stage, name of person who identified the specimen, and any other previous identifications. Each specimen is listed with a unique specimen number (either an institutional catalog number or an AAM-XXXXX number used by the junior author) that will allow the re-investigation as well as provide a unique Life Science Identifier (LSID). The occurrence of all species is illustrated in distribution maps plotted with http://www.simplemapper.net with all of those localities for which co-ordinates are available. Type localities are plotted with a square symbol while all other specimens are plotted with a circular symbol.

The distribution map includes Biodiversity Hotspots sensu Conservation International (Mittermeier, 1998; Myers et al., 2000; Mittermeier et al., 2005). The specimen occurrence data are deposited as a Darwin Core Archive (DwC-A) in the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) using the Integrated Publishing Toolkit (IPT) at the NMNH.

Photographs and illustrations

Whole habitus photographs of pinned specimens were taken using a Visionary Digital Passport II system (base and StackShot only), an Olympus OM-D EM-5 Micro 4/3 camera, a 60mm f/2.8 macro lens (equivalent to 120 mm focal length in 35 mm photography). The specimens were illuminated by a Falcon FLDM-i200 LED dome-light for even and soft light. Individual RAW-format images were stacked using HeliconFocus Pro (version 6.7) and exported in Adobe DNG-format. For further information on the imaging and post-production workflow see Photographing asiloid flies blog post. All photographs have been deposited in Morphbank::Biological Imaging and images of additional specimens are available on that platform, too. These images will be automatically harvested by the Encyclopedia of Life (EOL) and are available under the respective species page.

Morphological features were illustrated using a 10 × 10 ocular grid on the Olympus SZ60 stereo microscope and later digitally converted to vector graphics using Adobe Illustrator software. The illustrations of male and female terminalia have been deposited in digital format (svg-format) in figshare.

Key

The dichotomous, interactive key has been built with Lucid Phoenix and the multi-access, matrix-based key with Lucid Builder and both can be accessed on Lucidcentral and the junior author’s research web-site.

Institutions providing specimens

Institutions providing specimens are listed below, together with the abbreviations used in the text when citing depositories (institutionCode), a link to the record in the Global Registry of Biodiversity Repositories (GRBio), and the people who kindly assisted: AMNH – American Museum of Natural History, New York City, New York, USA (D. Grimaldo); BMNH – Natural History Museum, London, UK (E. McAlistier); CAS – California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California, USA (M. Trautwein); CNC – Canadian National Collection of Insects, Arachnids and Nematodes, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (J. Skevington); CSCA – California State Collection of Arthropods, Sacramento, California, USA (M. Hauser, E. Fisher); IMLA – Fundacion e Instituto Miguel Lillo, Universidad Nacional de Tucumán, Tucumán, Argentina (E. Constanza Perez); IADIZA – Instituto Argentino de Investigaciones de las Zonas Áridas, Mendoza, Argentina (C. Dominguez, S. Roig); MNHN – Museum national d’Histoire naturelle, Paris, France (C. Dauger, E. Delfosse); MUSM – Museo de Historia Natural, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Peru (G. Lamas, P. Sanchez Flores); MZSP – Museu de Zoologia, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (C. Lamas); SMNS – Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde, Stuttgart, Baden-Württemberg, Germany (H.-P. Tschorschig); ZSMC – Zoologische Staatssammlung, München, Bayern, Germany (M. Kotroba).
Data resources

Lucid Phoenix: illustrated, dichotomous identification key – keys.lucidcentral.org/keys/phoenix/plomydas/.
Morphbank: image collection ID – B60614.
Plyz TreatmentBank: taxon treatments: Wilcox and Papavero, 1971 – AD29FFB3FF8E2724FFC56619FFDF6F
SimpleMapp: distribution map – 6102 (as in Fig. 27) – Google Earth KML file 6102.
ZooBank nomenclatorial acts: Wilcox and Papavero, 1971 B57257ED-AF72-4AEB-AF09-9047AEFD73F
Wilcox and Papavero, 2017 FF635991-5F13-4B7D-A3E4-D314ABB E9E98.

Taxonomy

Plymydas Wilcox and Papavero, 1971
ZooBank 43AF4DE6-F7DE-4F35-801F-BF4248D531BB
Plym TreatmentBank 43AF4DE6-F7DE-4F35-801F-BF4248D531BB


Diagnosis: The genus is distinguished from other Mydinae by the absence of a ventral metathoracic tibial keel (Figs. 2 and 20), only slightly enlarged metathoracic femora (Figs. 2 and 20), and a partly pubescent scutum (either stripes Fig. 12 or spots Fig. 19). Messiasia notopsila (Wiedemann, 1828) (see Figs. 28–33) is somewhat similar to Plymydas because it exhibits a weakly developed tibial keel and a grey pubescence pattern on the scutum, but can be separated from Plymydas based on the more expanded metathoracic femur and male terminalia. The distinct ventro–posterior gonocoxal process is much more developed in Plymydas than it is in Messiasia and the two other posterior gonocoxal processes (see Fig. 7) are unique to Plymydas within Mydinae (J. Calhau, pers. comm.). See also Discussion for transfer of Plymydas to Mydinae: Messiasini.

Description: F* abdomen and genitalia (Figs. 10 and 11): densely arranged anteriorly directed setae absent on posterior T and S; T8 with broad anterior rectangular apodeme; T9 simple, rectangular; T9+10 entirely fused, T10 formed by single sclerite, acanthophorite spines absent; 3 spermathecae, all equally large, formed by ±expanded weakly sclerotized ducts; individual spermathecal duct short; S9 (furca) formed by 1 sclerite, inverted U-shaped (joined anteriorly, separated posteriorly), anterior furcal apodeme absent, lateral furcal apodeme present, median furcal bridge absent.

M* abdomen and terminalia (Figs. 7–9, 21–26): T1–7 well-developed, entirely sclerotized, T8 postero–medially weakly sclerotized, with anterior transverse sclerotized bridge connecting lateral sclerites; T7–8 anteriorly with 2 lateral apodemes; S6 regular, without any special setation postero–medially; S8 simple plate, entire (undivided) ventro–medially, with horn–like antero–lateral processes, not fused to T8 dorso–laterally; epandrium formed by two sclerites, separated medially and only joining anteriorly, distally in dorsal view pointed postero–laterally; subependrial sclerite without lateral or medial protuberances; hypandrium concave, cup–shaped, entirely sclerotized ventrally, entirely fused with gonocoxite, forming a gonocoxite–hypandrial complex, supra–hypandrial sclerite absent; gonocoxite simple, short, hook–like, without median or lateral protuberance, gonocoxal apodeme present, short (at most slightly extending hypopygium anteriorly); 1 functional phallic prong, short and wide, phallic epimere present, distally simple, evenly rounded; lateral ejaculatory process absent; ejaculatory apodeme formed by single dorso–ventrally oriented plate; ventro–median margin of parameral sheath heavily sclerotized (appearing entirely closed); parameral sheath long, sperm sac entirely covered; sperm sac appearing ± heavily sclerotized.

Plymydas adelpe sp. nov.

ZooBank 2780A7A0-0548-4F53-97AF-BCFD98B057FC
Figs. 1–11, 27

Diagnosis: The species is distinguished from congeners by the scutal pubescence pattern with only three pairs of grey pubescent spots (Figs. 1 and 5) and the absence of a grey pubescent stripe on the posterior anepisternum (Fig. 2).

Etymology: From Greek adelpe = sister, referring to overall morphological similarity to Plymydas phalaros sp. nov.

Description: Head: black, in general grey pubescent; width distinctly greater than thorax, interocular distance on vertex larger than at ventral eye margin, vertex between compound eyes slightly depressed, parafacial area very narrow, facial gibbosity nearly touching median eye margin; facial gibbosity distinct, well-developed and discernible in lateral view; mystax brown, covering facial gibbosity except dorso–medially; frons not elevated, laterally grey pubescent, medially apubescent; vertex apubescent; postgena lightly grey pubescent; setation: vertex black, frons brown, ocp setae yellow, pole macrosetae black; ocellar triangle apubescent; proboscis brown, long, reaching fronto–clypeal sutures; labellum large, much wider than prementum, longer than prementum and as long as oral cavity, unsclerotized laterally; maxillary palpus cylindrical, light brown, about 1/3 length of proboscis.

Antenna: brown, bulbous part of postpedicel light brown, scape and pedicel black setose dorsally and ventrally, rarely brown setose dorsally and ventrally; postpedicular cylindrical in proximal 1/2, symmetrically bulbous in distal 1/2, ±5.0 times as long as combined length of scape and pedicel, bulbous part brown setose dorsally and ventrally; apical seta–like sensory element situated apically in cavity on postpedicel.

Thorax: black or brown, predominantly apubescent with distinct grey pubescent scutal and pleural spots; scutum uniformly black, surface predominantly smooth, postero–paramediaally rivose, lightly grey pubescent with distinct grey pubescent spots: 1 pair antero–paramedially, 2 pairs laterally (1 at transverse suture, 1 postero–laterally), scutal setation comprised of pubescent spots long black or brown setose; dc setae pre– and postmutilar black, acr setae absent, lateral scutal setae black or brown, npl setae 0, spal setae 0, pal setae 0; antepronotal dorso–medially smooth (without any indentation); postpronotal lobe brown to black, lightly grey pubescent; proepisternum, lateral postpronotum, and postpronotal lobe long black setose; scutellum lightly grey pubescent, brown setose, apical scutellar setae absent; mesosternal, anatergite, and katatergite lightly grey pubescent, asetose, katatergite elevated and smoothly convex; anterior anepisternum lightly grey pubescent, asetose, supero–posterior anepisternum apubescent, asetose; posterior anepimeron long brown setose, katapimeron asetose; metaneupsternum lightly grey pubescent, asetose, metepimeron evenly elevated, same color as T1, grey pubescent, asetose; infra–halter sclerite absent.

Leg: light brown to brown, setation predominantly black; pro, mes, and met coxa lightly grey pubescent, black setose; met trochanter setose medially; femur black or brown, met
femur ± cylindrical only slightly wider than pro and mes femur, in distal 1⁄2 macrosetose, 1 antero-ventral and 1 postero-ventral row of macrosetae, postero-ventrally long brown setose; pro and mes tibia laterally arched, met tibia straight, met tibia cylindri-
cal, ventral keel absent, postero-laterally regular setose; pro and
mes tarsomere 1 longer than tarsomere 2, but less than combined
length of tarsomeres 2–3, met tarsomere 1 as long as combined
length of tarsomeres 2–3; pulvillus well-developed, as long as well-
developed claw, and as wide as base of claw; setiform empodium
absent.

Wing: length = 15.2–18.5 mm; light brown stained, especially
along veins, distal 1⁄4 and posterior margin unstained, veins brown,
microtrichia absent; cells r1, r4, r5, m3, + cup closed except r5 open;
C well-developed, around entire wing; R4 terminates in R1; R6 ter-
minates in R1; stump vein (R3) at base of R4 present, long but not
reaching R2; R4 and R5 ± parallel medially: r-m distinct, R4 + z and
M1 apart, connected by crossvein; M1 curves slightly anteriorly
at r-m, M1 (or M1 + M2) terminates in C; M4 and CuA split pro-
ximally to m-cu (cell m4 narrow proximally); M3 + M4 terminate
together in C (reaching wing margin); CuP straight, cell cup wide,
CuP and wing margin further apart proximally than distally; alula
well-developed, very large and partly overlapping with scutellum
medially; halter brown.

Abdomen: brown to metallic bluish-black; setation com-
prised of scattered black setae, surface entirely smooth; T1–7
brown with narrow yellow posterior margin; T1 long brown to
black setose, T2–7 short black setose; T1 lightly grey pubescent,
T2–7 apubescent; S1 brown with light brown posterior margin,
S2–6 brown with narrow yellow posterior margin; S1 asetose,
S2–7 sparsely black setose; S apubescent; T2–4 parallel-sided
and not constricted waist-like; bullae on T2 black, transversely
elongate, surface entirely smooth, T2 surface anterior to bullae
smooth.

Type locality: Argentina: Mendoza: Rt. 142 at Mendoza River,
32°35′29″S 068°17′28″W (−32.59139 − 68.29111).

Material examined: Argentina: Mendoza: 1M* Rt. 142 at Men-
doza River, 21 km NE Costa de Araujo, 32°35′29″S 068°17′28″W,
−32.59139 − 68.29111, 585 m, 2015-12-04, Steiner, W., Swearin-
gen, J. (USNMENT01242234, Holotype, IADIZA); 1F* Mendoza,
35°52′00″S 068′49″00″W, −32.88944 − 68.84583, 1907-00-00
(AAM-004053, Paratype, ZSMC); La Rioja: 1M* Cuesta de Miranda,
29°19′00″S 067′39″00″W, −29.31667 − 67.65, 1700 m, 1977-11-29,
Willink, A., Fidalgo (AAM-002719, Paratype, MZSP).

Distribution and biodiversity hotspot: Western Argentina in the
provinces of La Rioja and Mendoza (Fig. 27). Not known to occur in
any biodiversity hotspot.
Figs. 7–11. Male and female terminalia of Plyomydas adelphi sp. nov.: (1) M* paratype (MZSP-MZ003844), lateral (posterior gonocoxal processes highlighted in grey); (2) same, dorsal; (3) same, ventral; (4) F* paratype (AAM-004053), dorsal; (5) same, ventral. Scale line = 1 mm, setation omitted. Figshare DOI 10.6084/m9.figshare.4490462.

Remarks: Sexual dimorphism is minimal. Based on the three known specimens, females are larger (wing length 18.5 mm in the sole female paratype, 15.2–16.6 mm in two males) and dimorphism only occurs in color of legs and sclerites. The holotype was collected in low flat mesquite desert and dry riverbed.

**Plyomydas peruviensis** Wilcox and Papavero, 1971: 108

ZooBank F954F6B0-BC56-4C16-8882-0D2734030993
Plazi TreatmentBank 511087CB-FFCB-276D-FC9D-67B4FB8EF D41

Figs. 12–14, 21–23, 27

Diagnosis: The species is distinguished from congeners by the scutal pubescence pattern with three distinct grey pubescent stripes (no spots, Fig. 12), the presence of a grey pubescent stripe on the posterior anepisternum (Fig. 13), and its distribution in coastal Peru (Fig. 27).

Description: Head: brown, facial gibbosity light brown, in general grey pubescent; width distinctly greater than thorax, interocular distance on vertex larger than at ventral eye margin, vertex between compound eyes slightly depressed, parafacial area very narrow, facial gibbosity nearly touching median eye margin; facial gibbosity distinct, well-developed and discernible in lateral view; mystax yellow, sparse; frons not elevated, entirely grey pubescent; vertex entirely grey pubescent; postgena grey pubescent; setation: vertex yellow, frons brown or light brown, ocpl setae yellow, pocl macrosetae light brown; ocellar triangular apubescent; proboscis brown, long, reaching fronto-clypeal suture; labellum large, much wider than prementum, longer than prementum and as long as oral cavity, unsclerotized laterally; maxillary palp cylindrical, light brown, about ¾ length of proboscis.

Antenna: brown, bulbous part of postpedicel light brown, scape and pedicel brown setose dorsally and ventrally; postpedicel cylindrical in proximal 2/5, symmetrically bulbous in distal 3/5, ≥5.0 times as long as combined length of scape and pedicel, bulbous part brown setose dorsally and ventrally; apical seta-like sensory element situated apically in cavity on postpedicel.

Thorax: light brown, predominantly apubescent with distinct grey pubescent scutal stripes and pleural spots; scutum uniformly brown, surface predominantly smooth, postero-paramedially rivose, predominantly grey pubescent, apubescent paramedian and median stripes (not reaching posterior margin), scutal setation comprised of pubescent stripes short black setose; dc setae pre- and postsuturally brown, acr setae absent, lateral scutal setae brown, npl setae 0, sopal setae 0, pal setae 0; antepronotum dorso-medially smooth (without any indentation); postpronotal lobe light brown, grey pubescent; proepisternum, lateral postpronotum, and postpronotal lobe short brown setose; scutellum lightly grey pubescent, laterally densely grey pubescent, brown setose, apical scutellar setae absent; mesopostnotum, anatergite, and katatergite lightly grey pubescent, asetose, katatergite elevated and smoothly convex; anterior anepisternum lightly grey pubescent, asetose, supero-posterior anepisternum grey pubescent, asetose; posterior anepimeron short brown setose, katepimeron asetose; metanepisternum grey pubescent, asetose, metepimeron evenly elevated, same color as T1, grey pubescent, asetose; infra-halter sclerite absent.

Leg: light brown to brown, setation predominantly brown; pro, mes, and met coxa lightly grey pubescent, brown setose; met trochanter setose medially; femur light brown, met femur ~ cylindrical only slightly wider than pro and mes femur, in distal ½ macrosetose, 1 antero-ventral and 1 postero-ventral row of macrosetae, postero-ventrally long brown setose; pro and mes tibia laterally arched, met tibia straight, met tibia cylindrical, ventral keel absent, postero-laterally regular setose; pro and mes tarsomere 1 longer than tarsomere 2, but less than combined length of tarsomeres 2–3, met tarsomere 1 as long as combined length of tarsomeres 2–3; pulvillus well-developed, as long as well-developed claw, and as wide as base of claw; setiform empodium absent.
Wing: length = 10.7–13.0 mm; slightly brown stained throughout, veins brown, microtrichia absent; cells r1, r4, r5, m3, + cup closed except r5 open; C well-developed, around entire wing; R4 terminates in R1; R5 terminates in R1; stump vein (R3) at base of R4 present, long but not reaching R2; R4 and R5 ± parallel medially; Rm distinct, R4 + 5 and M1 apart, connected by crossvein; M1 curves slightly anteriorly at r-m, M1 (or M1 + M2) terminates in C; M4 and CuA split proximally to m-cu (cell m4 narrow proximally); M3 + M4 terminate together in C (reaching wing margin); CuP straight, cell cup wide, CuP and wing margin further apart proximally than distally; alula well-developed, very large and partly overlapping with scutellum medially; halter light brown.

Abdomen: brown to metallic bluish-black; setation comprised of sparsely short scattered setae, surface entirely smooth; T1–7 brown with narrow yellow posterior margin; T1 long light brown setose, T2–7 sparsely brown setose; T1 lightly grey pubescent, T2–7 apubescent; S1 brown with light brown posterior margin, S2–6 brown with narrow yellow posterior margin; S1 ase-tose, S2–7 sparsely black setose; S apubescent; T2–4 parallel-sided and not constricted waist-like; bulae on T2 black, transversely elongate, surface entirely smooth, T2 surface anterior to bulae smooth.

F* abdomen: No female was available for detailed study.

Type locality: Peru: Lima, 12°03′00″S 077°02′00″W (−12.05−77.0333).

Material examined: Peru: Ica: 1F* Eglise de Pisco, 13°42′36″S 076°12′12″W, −13.71−76.20333, 1954-12-29, Dorst (AAM-001235, MNHN); La Libertad: 1M* Cartavio, 07°53′30″S 079°13′22″W, −7.89167−79.222278, 0000−00-00, Smyth, E (AAM-003729, Paratype, AMNH); 1M* Cartavio, 0000−00-00, Smyth, E. (AAM-003730, Paratype, AMNH); Lima: 1M* Lima, 12°03′00″S 077°02′00″W, −12.05−77.03333, 1939-02-08, Weyrauch, W. (MZSP-MZ001668, Holotype, MZSP); 1M* Lima, 1968-01-15, Picho, H. (MZSP-MZ003836, Paratype, MZSP); 1F* Lima, 1969-02-11, Razuri, V. (MZSP-MZ003837, Paratype, MZSP); 1M* Lima, 1939-02-08, Weyrauch, W. (CNCDiptera198085, CNC); 1M* Lima, 1948-04-00 (AAM-003005, MUSM); 1M* Hacienda Chuquitantana, 12°04′32″S 076°57′00″W, −12.07556−76.95, 1974-03-10, Lamas, G. (AAM-003742, MUSM); 1M* Antioquia, 12°04′49″S 076°30′36″W, −12.08028−76.51, 1975-01-11, Garcia, R. (AAM-003737, MUSM); 1M* La Molina, 12°04′54″S 076°55′45″W, −12.08167−76.92917, 280 m, 1966-03-11, Garcia, R. (AAM-003769, MUSM); 1M* La Molina, 280 m, 1966-03-11, Garcia, R. (AAM-003731, MUSM); 1F* no locality data (BMNH(E)1202927, BMNH).

Distribution and biodiversity hotspot: Coastal Peru (Fig. 27). Not known to occur in any biodiversity hotspot.

Remarks: The description above is based on male specimens only because no females were available for detailed study to provide an updated F* description and inclusion in this manuscript although three specimens (see above) had been studied several years ago and can be unambiguously assigned to this species. Sexual dimorphism is most likely minimal as in the other species and the female terminalia will most likely be identical to P. adelphi sp. nov. and P. phalaros sp. nov. The female specimen in the BMNH (BMNH(E)1202927) was apparently studied by Macquart and labeled Mydas peruvianus, but never described as a new species by him.

Plymydas phalaros sp. nov.

ZooBank AA0C21E1-0420-4A8A-93F3-40DC17864BCE Figs. 15–20, 24–27

Diagnosis: The species is distinguished from congeners by the scutal pubescence pattern with four pairs and a postero-median grey pubescent spot (Figs. 15–18, 19–20), and the presence of a grey pubescent stripe on the posterior anepisternum (Figs. 16 and 20).

Etymology: From Greek phalaros = white-spotted, referring to the distinctive grey pubescent spots on the scutum.

Description: Head: brown, in general grey pubescent; width distinctly greater than thorax, interocular distance on vertex larger than at ventral eye margin, vertex between compound eyes

Figs. 12–14. Photographs of male Plymydas peruvianus (AAM-003731): (12) dorsal (Morphbank #860772); (13) same, lateral (#860774); (14) same, head anterior (#860776). Scale line = 5 mm.
Figs. 15–20. Photographs of male and female Plyomydas phalaros sp. nov.: (15) M* holotype (AAM-005629), dorsal (Morphbank #860834); (16) same, lateral (860836); (17) same, head anterior (860838); (18) F* paratype (MZSP MZ003846), head anterior (860752); (19) same, dorsal (860524); (20) same, lateral (860750). Scale line = 5 mm.

Figs. 21–26. Male terminalia of Plyomydas species: (21) Plyomydas peruviensis (AAM-003729), lateral; (22) same, dorsal; (23) same, ventral; (24) Plyomydas phalaros sp. nov. paratype (CASENT8380022), lateral; (25) same, dorsal; (26) same, ventral. Scale line = 1 mm, setation omitted. Figshare DOI 10.6084/m9.figshare.4490474.
slightly depressed, parafacial area very narrow, facial gibbosity nearly touching median eye margin; facial gibbosity distinct, well-developed and discernible in lateral view: mystax brown, covering facial gibbosity except dorso-medially; frons not elevated, laterally grey pubescent, medially apubescent; vertex apubescent; postgena lightly grey pubescent; setation: vertex brown, frons brown, ocp setae yellow, pc1 macrosetae brown; ocellar triangle apubescent; proboscis brown, long, reaching fronto-clypeal suture; labellum large, much wider than prementum, longer than prementum and as long as oral cavity, unsclerotized laterally; maxillary palpus cylindrical, light brown, about 1/3 length of proboscis.

Antenna: brown, bulbous part of postpedicel light brown, scape and pedicel black setose dorsally and ventrally, rarely brown setose dorsally and ventrally; postpedicel cylindrical in proximal ½, symmetrically bulbous in distal ½, ≥5.0 times as long as combined length of scape and pedicel, bulbous part brown setose dorsally and ventrally; apical seta-like sensory element situated apically in cavity on postpedicel.

Thorax: brown, predominantly apubescent with distinct grey pubescent scutal and pleural spots; scutum uniformly black, surface predominantly smooth, postero-paramedially rivose, lightly grey pubescent with distinct grey pubescent spots: 1 pair antero-paramedially, 3 pairs laterally (1 antero-laterally, 1 at transverse suture, 1 postero-laterally), 1 spot postero-medially, scutal setation comprised of pubescent spots long black or brown setose; dc setae pre- and postsutrurally brown, acr setae absent, lateral scutal setae brown, npl setae 0, spal setae 0, pal setae 0; antepronotum dorso-medially smooth (without any indentation); postpronotal lobe brown, predominantly grey pubescent; proepisternum, lateral postpronotum, and postpronotal lobe brown setose; scutellum lightly grey pubescent, laterally densely grey pubescent, brown setose, apical scutellar setae absent; mesosternum, antergite, and katatergite lightly grey pubescent, astose, katatergite elevated and smoothly convex; anterior anepisternum lightly grey pubescent, astose, supero-posterior anepisternum grey pubescent, astose; posterior anepimeron long brown setose, katepimeron astose; metanepisternum lightly grey pubescent, astose, metepimeron evenly elevated, same color as T1, grey pubescent, astose; infra-halter sclerite absent.

Leg: brown, setation predominantly black; pro, mes, and met coxa lightly grey pubescent, black setose; met trochanter setose medially; femur brown, met femur ± cylindrical only slightly wider.
than pro and mes femur, in distal ½ macrosetose, 1 antero-ventral 
and 1 postero-ventral row of macrosetae, postero-ventrally long 
brown setose; pro and mes tergita laterally arched, met tergita straight, 
mixed series, ventral keel absent, postero-laterally regular 
setose; pro and mes tarsome 1 longer than tarsome 2, but 
less than combined length of tarsomes 2–3, met tarsome 1 as long 
as combined length of tarsomes 2–3; pulvillus well-developed, 
as long as well-developed claw, and as wide as base of claw; setiform 
empodium absent.

Wing: length = 16.7–20.8 mm; light brown stained, especially 
along veins, distal ¼ and posterior margin unstained, veins brown, 
microtrichia absent; cells r1, r2, r3, r4, M1, M4, + cup closed except r5 open; 
C well-developed, around entire wing: R4 terminates in R1; R5 
terminates in R4; stump vein (R3) at base of R4 present, long but not 
reaching R2; R4 and R5 parallel medially; m-r distinct, R4 + s, and 
M1 apart, connected by crossvein; M1 curves slightly anterior 
at r-m; M1 (or M1 + M2) terminates in C; M4 and CuA split proximally 
to m-cu (cell m3 narrow proximally); M3 + M4 terminate 
together in C (reaching wing margin); CuP straight, cell cup wide, 
CuP and wing margin further apart proximally than distally; alula 
well-developed, very large and partly overlapping with scutellum 
medially; halter brown.

Abdomen: brown to metallic bluish-black; setation comprised 
of scattered black setae, surface entirely smooth; T1–7 brown 
with narrow yellow posterior margin; T1 long brown to black 
setose, T2–7 short black setose; T1 lightly grey pubescent, T2–7 apubescent; 
S1 brown with light brown posterior margin, S2–6 brown 
with narrow yellow posterior margin; S1 setose, S2–7 
sparsely black setose; S apubescent; T2–4 parallel-sided and not 
constricted waist-like; pleurae on T2 black, transversely elongate, 
surface entirely smooth, T2 surface anterior to pleurae smooth.

Type locality: Argentina: Catamarca: Belén, 27°38′59″S 
067°01′58″W (−27.64972−67.03278).

Material examined: Argentina: Catamarca: 1♂ Belén, 27°38′59″S 
067°01′58″W, −27.64972−67.03278, 1975-11-25, 
Bohart, R. (AAM-009629, Holotype, CSCA); 1♂ 1♀ Belén, 6 km 
S, 27°43′47″S 067°01′15″W, −27.72972−67.02803, 1975-11- 
25, Stange, L. (M* AAM-002714, F* AAM-002718, Paratypes, 
IMLA); 1♂ 4♂ Belén, 6 km S, 1975-11-25, Stange, L. (MZSP- 
MZ000383–MZSP-MZ003841, MZSP-MZ003846, Paratypes, 
MZSP); Salta: 1♂ Cafayate, 22 km N, 26°02′56″S 065°54′01″W, 
−26.04889−65.90028, 1578 m, 2003-11-13, white sand dunes, 
Irwin, M., Parker, F. (CASENT8380021–CASENT8380022, Paratypes, 
CAS); 1♂ Cafayate, 26°04′06″S 065°58′29″W, −26.06383 
−65.97472, 1700 m, 1991-01-05, dune, Osten, T. (AAM-003864, 
Paratype, SMNS); 1♂ Cafayate, 1993-11-14, Rozen, J., Rozen, 
B. (AAM-004054, Paratype, AMNH); Paraguay: San Pedro: 1♂ Carumbé, 24°08′46″S 056°37′30″W, −23.95 −56.76, 1973- 
01-10–1973-02-10, Golbach, R. (MZSP-MZ0003843, Paratype, 
MZSP).

Distribution and biodiversity hotspot: Western Argentina (Cata-
marca and Salta) and Paraguay (San Pedro) (Fig. 27). The geographic 
co-ordinates for Carumbé (Paraguay) are taken from GIBF record 
416921317. The easternmost distribution of this species in 
Paraguay overlaps with the Atlantic Forest biodiversity hotspot.

Remarks: Sexual dimorphism is minimal with only slight 
differences in color of sclerites or setae. The two females studied 
have a wing length of 19.3–19.4 mm while males have a wing length 
of 16.7–20.8 mm. Two specimens (AAM-003864, AAM-002715) 
lack the postero-median grey pubescent spot directly anterior to 
the scutellum. We believe that these two specimens belong to P. 
phalaros sp. nov. though. The disjunct distribution of P. phalaros 
sp. nov. in mid-elevation western Argentina and low-elevation 
Paraguay is interesting. We have no reason to believe that the 
Paraguayan specimen (AAM-002720) is mislabeled as a search 
on the internet reveals that other insects have been collected by 
R. Golbach in Carumbé in the 1970s (Google search) providing evi-
dence that the specimen is correctly labeled.

Key to species

1. Scutum predominantly densely grey pubescent, only median 
stripe (not reaching posterior margin) and paramedian stripes 
absent (Fig. 12); coastal Peruvian Andes . . . phalaris
2. Scutum predominantly apubescent, with only widely separated 
antero and lateral grey pubescent spots (Fig. 1); western 
Argentina and Paraguay . . . 2
3. Scutum with only three pairs of grey pubescent spots 
(antero-lateral spot posterior to postpronotal lobe absent, 
Figs. 1–2) and without postero-median pubescent spot (Fig. 1); 
scutellum only lightly pubescent; anepisternum without posterior 
pubescent stripe (Fig. 2); postpronotal lobe lightly grey pubescent 
. . . adelphe sp. nov.
4. Scutum with four pairs of grey pubescent spots (antero-lateral 
spot posterior to postpronotal lobe distinct, Figs. 15 and 16) 
and with postero-median grey pubescent spot (in addition to other 
spots although absent in two studied specimens, Figs. 15 and 19); 
scutellum densely grey pubescent laterally; anepisternum with 
narrow posterior pubescent stripe (Figs. 16 and 20); postpronotal 
lobe distinctly grey pubescent . . . phalaros sp. nov.

Discussion

Male terminalia are often reliable in delimiting species bound-
aries, but they can be conserved among species of a genus or even 
across generic boundaries such as in Afrotropical Sylleomydinae 
(Dikow, in press). Within Plyomydas, the male terminalia are very 
similar in all three species and cannot easily be described with 
words so that we defer the reader to compare the illustrations 
(Figs. 7–9, 21–26). We postulate that in this taxon the thoracic 
pubescent pattern is reliable for species delimitation and that 
comparison of male terminalia is unnecessary at this stage.

Transfer from Leptomydinae to Mydinae: Messiasini

Wilcox and Papavero (1971), Papavero (2009), and Papavero and 
Artigas (2009) consider Plyomydas to belong to Leptomydinae. This 
is chiefly based on the absence of a keel on the ventral metatho-
racic tibia, which is absent in Sylleomydinae but present in virtually all Mydinae (an exception is Messiasia notospila 
(Wiedemann, 1828) known from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and 
Uruguay with a weakly developed keel (Figs. 28–33)). We regard 
the absence of the metathoracic tibial keel to be a simple loss of this 
feature and not an important feature to place the genus Ploymy-
das in Leptomydinae. Instead, as in all Mydinae, and several other 
Mydinae genera, vein M3+M4 reaches the costal vein C in Ploymy-
das (Fig. 12) and which is absent in all Leptomydinae genera. 
Furthermore, the female terminalia of Ploymydas lack acanchnorhite 
spines and tergite 10 is a single sclerite (Fig. 10) as found in all 
Mydinae, Cacatopuspyginae, and three genera of Sylleomydinae in 
the Afrotropical Region (Dikow, in press). All known Leptomydinae, 
in contrast, utilize a divided tergite 10 with acanchnorhite spines 
to ovipositor in sand or soil. From the shape of the female terminalia 
we can postulate that Ploymydas species oviposit in either decaying 
wood or ant nests as has been observed in other Mydinae taxa (see 
Papavero and Artigas, 2009).

Note that the key to Neotropical subfamilies in Papavero 
and Artigas (2009) is incorrect in couplet 11 where it should read “Hind 
tibia with ventral keel (carinate). Subfamily Mydinae . . . 12” and 
“Hind tibia cylindrical. Subfamily Leptomydinae . . . 23”. This key will 
key out Ploymydas correctly, but within Leptomydinae and not 
within Mydinae as proposed here.

The Mydinae are currently divided into four tribes (Papavero 
and Wilcox, 1974; Wilcox et al., 1989) and we place Ploymydas 
in the Messiasini based on the similarity to Messiasia, the only
Fig. 28–33. Photographs of male and female Messias notospila (Argentina: Entre Ríos: Pronunciamiento, 32° 20' 45'' S 058° 26' 40'' W, 1970-03-00, Bolle, S.): (28) M* (CNCDiptera198880), dorsal (Morphbank #860859); (29) same, lateral (#860861); (30) same, head anterior (#860863); (31) F* (CNCDiptera198880), head anterior (#860870); (32) same, dorsal (#860866); (33) same, lateral (#860868). Scale line = 5 mm.

included genus so far, in antennal, proboscis, and female terminalia morphology. With Plyomydas now in Mydinae, Leptomydinae is a taxon restricted to the Northern Hemisphere with the exception of Hesemydas from Madagascar.

Seasonal incidence

Species of Plyomydas have only been collected during the Southern Hemisphere summer to early autumn. Plyomydas adelphe sp. nov. has been collected in November–December, Plyomydas peruviensis between December–April, and Plyomydas phalaros sp. nov. in November in Argentina and January–February in Paraguay.

Biodiversity hotspots

With the exception of the single specimen of Plyomydas phalaros sp. nov. from Paraguay, which is distributed in the Atlantic Forest biodiversity hotspot, the genus is not confined to and does not occur in any biodiversity hotspot sensu Conservation International.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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