

Insecta, Hymenoptera, Sphecidae, Prionyx pumilio (Taschenberg, 1869): Distribution extension

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ABSTRACT: Prionyx pumilio (Taschenberg, 1869) was recorded in Argentina, Peru, Chile and Brazil (in state of Goiás), the last report being questioned in the past. The present note extends the distribution of P. pumilio to northeast Brazil, in state of Paraíba, so, the record from Goiás must not be considered doubtful. The present finding indicates that P. pumilio is associated with dry ecosystems at least in part of its geographic distribution.

Prionyx Vander Linden is a widespread genus with 59 described species (Pulawski 2009), 15 of which occur in the Neotropical Region (Amarante 2002). Bohart and Menke (1963) defined the 'Prionyx pumilio species group' by the following features: (1) claws with two well-formed teeth; (2) metapleuron not channeled; (3) female clypeus entire; (4) male flagellum without fossulae. The group includes Prionyx pumilio (Taschenberg, 1869) and Prionyx chilensis (Spinola, 1851). The former species is easily distinguished from P. chilensis in (1) bearing white setae on the head and (2) first and second forewings submarginal cells receiving respectively the first and second recurrent veins. Head setae are black in P. chilensis, and the second and third submarginal cells of the forewings receiving respectively the first and second recurrent veins

Occurrence of *P. pumilio* was recorded in Argentina, Peru and Chile (Willink 1951; Bohart and Menke 1963; see also Pulawski 2009) and there is a record from as far northward as central Brazil, state of Goiás, by Berland (1926). The latter record was questioned by Willink (1951), who said that P. pumilio is characteristically a sub-andean species and probably does not occur in that region. On the other hand, Amarante (2002) reported the occurrence of *P. pumilio* in the state of Goiás in his catalog of Neotropical sphecids and crabronids, possibly repeating Berland's record.

The present note extends the distribution of *P. pumilio* as far north as northeast Brazil, based on the examination of 18 females and 1 male collected by Cincinato Rory Gonçalves (in August, 1956) in the locality of Brandão Junco, city of Santa Luzia (06°52'20"S, 36°55'07"W), state of Paraíba. The material examined is deposited in the entomological collection of the Museu Nacional -Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The specimens examined perfectly match with the description of P. pumilio by Willink (1951, as Neosphex pumilio) and do not show significant morphological variation. The discovery of *P. pumilio* in northeast Brazil indicates that it is not a strictly sub-andean species, so the record by Berland (1926) from the state of Goiás must not be considered doubtful based on Willink (1951) arguments. Remarkably, P. pumilio was recorded from two somewhat dry regions in Brazil; the state of Goiás, which is almost entirely covered by Cerrado Biome, a somewhat dry ecosystem, and the state of Paraíba, which is covered by semi-arid Biome of the Caatinga. Besides, P. pumilio was previously recorded in semi-arid environments in Argentina (e.g. Vasquez et al. 2008). Thus, P. pumilio is associated with dry ecosystems at least in part of its geographic distribution.

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