

# A NEW GENUS OF "ELFIN" BUTTERFLIES FROM THE NORTHERN HIGH ANDES (LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE)

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**ABSTRACT.**— *Podanotum* n. gen. (tribe Eumaeini, infratribe Thecloxurina), a new genus of high Andean "elfin"-like hairstreak butterflies, is described from two new species recently discovered in Colombia and Ecuador: *Podanotum clarissimus* n. sp. and *Podanotum metallicus* n. sp. The morphology of *Podanotum* places the genus in the "loxurina" subclade of the infratribe and is highly autapomorphic, but its wing shape more closely resembles that of the sister "arria" subclade. Brilliant dorsal "tinfoil"-like iridescence in the new genus strongly resembles that of certain sympatric species of *Lymanopoda* Westwood, [1851] (Nymphalidae, Satyrinae). The adaptive significance of this dorsal iridescence is discussed in the light of field observations and current data concerning possible cases of mimicry in *Lymanopoda*.

**RESUMEN.**— *Podanotum* (tribu Eumaeini, infratribu Thecloxurina), un género nuevo de mariposas licénidas del grupo de las "elfins" procedente de las grandes alturas Andinas, es descrito a partir de dos especies nuevas recientemente descubiertas en Colombia y Ecuador. La muy ostensible morfología autopomorfa de *Podanotum* permite colocarlo en el subclado "loxurina" de la infratribu. Sin embargo, la forma de las alas se parece más a la del subclado hermano "arria". El brillo iridiscente de la superficie dorsal semejante a papel metálico en el nuevo género le confieren un marcado parecido a simpátricas especies de *Lymanopoda* Westwood, [1851] (Nymphalidae, Satyrinae). Se discute el significado adaptativo de la iridescencia dorsal considerando las observaciones de campo y los datos recientes sobre posibles casos de mimetismo en *Lymanopoda*.

**KEY WORDS:** *Abloxurina*, *Caerofethra*, *Candora*, *Chlorostrymon*, Colombia, Ecuador, Eumaeini, hilltopping, *Lymanopoda*, mimicry, morphology, Neotropical, *Podanotum* n. gen., *Podanotum clarissimus* n. sp., *Podanotum metallicus* n. sp., *Pons*, *Pseudolucia*, *Rhamma*, *Shapiroana*, taxonomy.

Nearly simultaneously in 1995, Torres (in Colombia) and Hall and Willmott (in Ecuador) discovered species of brilliantly colored "elfin" butterflies (Lycaenidae, tribe Eumaeini, infratribe Thecloxurina) representing a previously unrecognized lineage of generic worth. Interestingly, the dorsal colors in these "elfins" resemble the bright "tinfoil" hues of some sympatric and synchronic species of *Lymanopoda* Westwood, [1851] (Nymphalidae: Satyrinae), and we discuss the possibility of mimicry between these two genera.

The purpose of this paper is to describe these new entities. The paper follows terminology in Johnson's (1992) monograph of Andean "elfins" and a subsequent paper (Salazar and Constantino, in press) describing another new genus from this eumaeine infratribe. This includes use of VFW, VHW and DFW, DHW for ventral and dorsal fore- (FW) and hindwings (HW), respectively.

Tribe EUMAEINI (*sensu* Eliot, 1973)

Infratribe THECLOXURINA (*sensu* Johnson, 1992)

**PODANOTUM** Torres & Johnson, new genus

Fig. 2a-d, 3a-d; 5a-d, 6a-f, 7a-d, 8a-f

Type species: *Podanotum clarissimus* Hall, Willmott & Johnson, new sp.

**Diagnosis.**— Wings: compared to all other Thecloxurina, the dorsal wing surfaces are brilliant "tinfoil" green with black borders of various width;

males lack scent brands; ventral surfaces light green-hued to gray-hued brown, each wing showing a submarginal spotband of blackish brown lunules or chevrons and, medially, a variously undulate lineal blackish brown band. HWs show only a slight anal lobe, if at all.

**Morphology:** females with notable bipartite genital habitus, uniquely sclerotized in terminal element only; male genitalia most resembling the genus *Candora* Johnson, 1992 (vinculum venter elliptic, arc of vinculum fully filled by valvae, saccus small), but with saccus and valvae in *Podanotum* more reduced, valve bilobes and caudal extensions of about equal length, and aedeagus with unique ventro-terminal keel.

**Description.**— Adult: tagmata blackish brown with profuse gray hairs and with occasional patches of bright iridescent blue-green scales; frons predominantly white with some brown scaling and long brown hairs; antennae typically eumaeine, finely striped white and black. MALE: lacking external secondary sexual marks in known species. DFW, DHW shape broad with outer margins convex, HW anal angle completely rounded or with only slight anal lobe; structural color brilliant "fine-grained" (*sensu* Johnson, 1992) silver-hued green of "tinfoil-like" intensity; borders blackish and of various width, wider at FW apex. VFW, VHW ground color green-hued to gray-hued brown, FW with arc of 4-7 blackish-brown lunules (or chevrons) across submargins paralleled basally by a narrow undulate medial band of varying intensity (basally blackish or brown, distally with white scales); HW with arc of 6-7 prominent blackish-brown lunules (or chevrons) across submargins paralleled basally by narrow undulate medial band of varying intensity (basally blackish or brown, distally with white scales) across medial area and, sometimes, a less apparent dark brown line across the postbasal