APANTELES ORNIGIS WEED, 1887 (INSECTA, HYMENOPTERA): PROPOSED CONSERVATION BY THE SUPPRESSION OF *MICROGASTER ROBINIAE* FITCH, 1859 Z.N.(S.)2506

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The braconid wasp widely known as *Pholetesor ornigis* (Weed) is a common parasitoid of blotchmining Lepidoptera and is perhaps the most frequently encountered member of its genus in eastern North America. Described as *Apanteles ornigis* Weed, 1887, p. 6, this species has accumulated a substantial literature due to its parasitism of *Phyllonorycter* spp. on cultivated apple (for an introduction see Johnson *et al.*, 1979; Pottinger & Roux, 1971; Maier, 1984). It now serves as the type species for *Pholetesor* Mason, 1981, p. 37.

2. In 1859, twenty-eight years prior to Weed's description of *ornigis*, Asa Fitch described *Microgaster robiniae*, p. 836, as a solitary parasitoid of *Recurvaria* (now *Sinoe*) *robiniella* Fitch on black locust, *Robinia pseudoacacia*. His description was inadequate even for his own time and the species was considered recognisable only on the basis of its light coloration. The name *robiniae* has since been used only in catalogs, species lists and keys (e.g. Viereck *et al.*, 1916; Muesebeck, 1920; Muesebeck, Krombein, Townes *et al.*, 1951; Krombein *et al.*, 1979; Mason, 1981) and then only with reference to what is known of the type series.

3. It now appears that the two names, *ornigis* Weed and *robiniae* Fitch, are subjective synonyms because; (a) *ornigis* Weed, as the name has been traditionally applied, refers to a parasitoid with a broad host range of blotchmining Lepidoptera on a diversity of deciduous trees, shrubs and woody vines (Krombein *et al.*, 1979; Whitfield, in prep, PhD dissertation), including leafminers on black locust; (b) the holotype of *Microgaster robiniae* Fitch is indistinguishable morphologically from many small individuals of *Pholetesor ornigis* (Weed), differing only in its light reddish color; (c) specimens of many species of *Pholetesor* which have been extensively exposed to sunlight are apt to bleach to a color similar to that of the *robiniae* holotype; (d) other specimens in Fitch's collection are unusually light or bleached in color (R. A. Wharton, pers. comm.) and (e) no fresh specimens resembling in color the *Microgaster robiniae* holotype have been recovered since, despite repeated rearings of the essentially morphologically identical *Pholetesor ornigis* (Weed) from the type host of *robiniae*. It appears that the holotype of *Microgaster robiniae* Fitch is a bleached specimen of the species generally referred to as *Apanteles* (or now *Pholetesor*) *ornigis* Weed.

4. The name *ornigis*, by contrast to *robiniae* Fitch, has been used in a large number of non–taxonomic papers during the last fifty years. For

example: Dutcher & Howitt, 1978; Gambino & Sullivan, 1982; Gibbons & Butcher, 1961; Herbert & McRae, 1983; Hough, 1957; Johnson *et al.*, 1978; Martin, 1956; Putman, 1935, 1942; Weaver & Dorsey, 1965.

5. To preserve usage of the name *ornigis* as it has been applied for 97 years to a well-known species, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is requested:

(1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the name *robiniae*, Fitch, 1859, as published in the binomen *Microgaster robiniae*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;

(2) to place the specific name *ornigis* Weed, 1887, as published in the binomen *Apanteles ornigis*, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology;

(3) to place the specific name *robiniae* Fitch, 1859, as published in the binomen *Microgaster robiniae*, and as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) above, on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology.

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