

A new species of fossil silky lacewing insects that lived more than 120 million years ago

October 5 2011



This is the new fossil species, Undulopsychopsis alexi. Credit: Prof. Dong Ren

A team of researchers from the Capital Normal University in Beijing (China) and the Institute of Biology and Soil Sciences in Vladivostok (Russia) has discovered a remarkable silky lacewing insect from the Mesozoic of China. The study has been published recently in the open access journal *ZooKeys* and is available for free download.

The extant silky lacewings (the family *Psychopsidae*) may be recognized by their broad wing shape, dense venation, spectacularly patterned and hairy wings. Today, this family is very small, restricted only to <u>southern</u> <u>Africa</u>, southeastern Asia and Australia, but in the Mesozoic, it was much more widely distributed.



The new fossil silky lacewing - *Undulopsychopsis alexi* - was found from in the Yixian Formation of western Liaoning Province, one of the most productive Mesozoic fossil-bearing horizons in <u>China</u>. The species is characterized by the undulate wing margin, a unique condition amongst known *Psychopsidae*, and a number of unusual characters of the wing venation.

"The most important trait of this fossil is that it shares the features of two different families of neuropteran <u>insects</u>, the extant *Psychopsidae* (known also from the Mesozoic) and the extinct Mesozoic *Osmylopsychopidae*", said the author Vladimir Makarkin.

This discovery is expected to shed light on the <u>evolutionary history</u> of lacewings related to the family *Psychopsidae*.

More information: Peng Y, Makarkin V, Wang X, Ren D (2011) A new fossil silky lacewing genus (Neuroptera, Psychopsidae) from the Early Cretaceous Yixian Formation of China. ZooKeys 130: 217-228. doi: 10.3897/zookeys.130.1576

Provided by Pensoft Publishers

Citation: A new species of fossil silky lacewing insects that lived more than 120 million years ago (2011, October 5) retrieved 30 April 2024 from <u>https://phys.org/news/2011-10-species-fossil-silky-lacewing-insects.html</u>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.