

Two new creeping water bug species found in Belize and Peru

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Ambrysus cayo, a newly discovered creeping water bug found in western Belize.

Two new insect species have been added to the 900,000+ species that have previously been described: *Ambrysus cayo*, which was found in streams in western Belize, and *Procryphocricos pilcopata*, which was found in streams in southeastern Peru. Both are true bugs in the suborder Heteroptera in the family Naucoridae and the subfamily Cryphocricinae—the saucer bugs (also called the creeping water bugs), so called because of their round, flat shape.

The discoverers are Dr. Robert W. Sites of the University of Missouri's

Enns Entomology Museum, Dr. William Shepard of the University of California-Berkeley's Essig Museum of Entomology, and Dr. Shepard's wife, Cheryl Barr. Dr. Sites and Dr. Shepard have collaborated on many insect-collecting expeditions around the world. Dr. Sites is a specialist in aquatic hemipterans, and Shepard specializes in aquatic beetles.

Descriptions of the [new species](#) appear in an article called "[Neotropical genera of Naucoridae \(Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Nepomorpha\): New species of *Ambrysus* and *Procryphocricos* from Belize and Peru,](#)" which was published in the *Annals of the Entomological Society of America*.

Shepard and Barr searched streams for [insects](#) at descending elevations, from cloud forests right down to the Amazonian lowlands. The scientists capture the underwater insects by turning over rocks and leaves and having a net ready in the water. The insects get caught by the current and flow right into the net.

"We know how to collect in areas where fauna was never checked before for [aquatic insects](#)," said Dr. Shepard. "Dr. Sites and I have long experience netting and turning over rocks and leaves."

The scientists believe that more needs to be done in order to obtain records of other insects that have not yet been discovered before it's too late.

"We must collect now because of the destruction of the Amazon forests," Shepard said. "Habitat is being destroyed by mining and clear-cutting. We have to try and get as many insects as possible so we can at least save records that these things existed. Insects get studied last, since they're less charismatic."



Procryphocricos pilcopata, a newly discovered creeping water bug found in Peru.

Provided by Entomological Society of America

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