Diversity in Peru: 3 subfamilies, 3 genera, 5 species.

Recognition: Ripiphoridae is a world-wide distributed family, with approximately 400 species classified into 40 genera and five subfamilies (see Lawrence et al. (2010) for the current classification). Of these, Hemirhipidinae are restricted to Australia and SE Asia, while Pelecotominae (=Micholaeminae), Ptilophorinae, Ripidiinae and Ripiphorinae have world-wide distribution (Lawrence et al., 2010).

Pelecotominae are represented in South America by the genera, Ancholaemus Gerstaecker, 1855 (2 species) and the monotypic Micholaemus Viana, 1971. Adults of the subfamily are characterized by the fully developed elytra, long and slender tarsi, and by the uniflabellate antennae of males and females, which are usually only slightly dissimilar between sexes.

Ptilophorinae are represented by the monotypic Elytroxyxystrotus Manfrini de Brewer, 1963 and the speciose Trigonodera Dejean, 1834. They are of similar habitus to Pelecotominae, but tarsi are shorter and stouter, and antennal dimorphism is usually more pronounced.

Ripiphorinae are widely represented by the genera Ripiphorus Bosc, 1791 and Macrosiagon Hentz, 1830. The elytra in Ripiphorus are scale-like and those in Macrosiagon dehiscent, exposing in both cases fully developed hind-wings and abdomen. The antennae are biflabellate in males and serrate or pectinate in females.

South American Ripidiini (Ripidiinae) contains the genera Neorrhipidius Viana, 1958 (3 species) and Pirhidius Besuchet, 1957 (1 species). Their males have uniflabellate antennae, reduced mouthparts, holoptic compound eyes composed of large ommatidia and shortened leathery elytra exposing functional hind-wings. The females of these genera are unknown, but are presumably larviform and flightless (Lawrence et al., 2010). The monotypic genus Aporrhips Pascoe, 1887, described from Brazil and listed in Ripidiinae by Lawrence et al. (2010; misspelled there as ‘Aporhips’), is no longer in Ripiphoridae, but belongs to Elateroidea, likely to the family Lycidae (Batelka and Hájek, 2009: 777).

Habitat: Ripiphoridae have complex life strategies which allow them to colonize various habitats, from deserts to rain forests, from the sea level to mountains close to 3000 m, or even man-made environments, such as town parks or suburban environment (Heitmans and Peeters, 1996; Gobbi, 2002), whenever the conditions are suitable for sufficient abundance of their host. Depending on the bionomics of particular genus, ripiphorids are also able to colonize distant volcanic and continental islands, either by their own dispersal mechanisms (Batelka, 2011a, b), or by cargo transported by ships and planes (Falin, 2001; Peck, 2006).