Phylogenetic Analysis Phase I: Test of Monophyly

After discovering highly distinct male genital morphologies and in some instances also a distinct overall appearance departing from typical Corydalus (e.g., male mandible length, antennal shape, or wing venation) in several South American species, it became necessary to evaluate their phylogenetic placement with respect to other Corydalinae genera before engaging in a species level analysis. Glorioso's (1981) genus level phylogeny of the subfamily supports the monophyly of American dobsonflies. Yet, characters defining Corydalus (e.g., his characters 14, 27, and 49′) were not always all-inclusive when considering the atypical species. The possibility existed, therefore, that ≥1 of the distinct species would fall out of Corydalus and closer to a different genus. Conversely, an outgroup (e.g., Platyneuromus or Chloronia) could conceivably fit inside the species group a priori considered to conform to Corydalus. It also is of general interest to observe whether the relationships between the American genera, as well as between Old World taxa, correspond to previous analyses.

Ninety-five adult morphological characters were scored for 20 taxa, including representative species of all currently recognized dobsonfly genera (Table 33). Fishflies (the Chauliodinae genera: Archichauliodes, Chauliodes, Dysmicohermes, Neohermes, Nigronia; Appendix 2) were specified as the outgroup. The grouping Corydalus sensu stricto (or the term typical Corydalus) is used informally to include Corydalus species clearly falling within the typical generic groundplan (i.e., similar to the type species). All North and Central American species can be considered in this category. The term