**LICHEN DIVERSITY IN CHIHUAHUAN DESERT IN NEW MEXICO, U.S.A.**

Kerry Knudsen\*, Jana Kocourková and Eva Hodková

University of Life Sciences in Prague. Email: \*knudsen@fzp,czu.cz

The Chihuahuan Desert has an area of about 501,896 km2 in Northern Mexico and in southern New Mexico and part of Texas in the United States. It is the largest desert in North America. It is high desert with lowest elevations at 900-1000 m and the Chihuahuan ecoregion extends from the desert floor to up to usually 2000 m in the desert mountains. Above that are the mountain tops are the famous sky islands of the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts with pine trees the pine trees and is the southern terminus of the Rocky Mountain ecoregion. The sky islands is where most research in lichens were done. Our project concentrated on studying lichens in the desert. Not on the mountain tops. We wanted to see what lichens grew in the wettest desert in North America (annual rainfall 22.58 cm). We expect to collect over 200 taxa. The dominant family of lichens are the Acarosporaceae. We have collected 22 described species, over half which were revised in the famous Sonoran lichen flora books. We are revising the others, some which are poorly known and forgotten. We will publish studies of ten undescribed taxa in four papers. Two papers deal with *Acarospora* and *Sarcogyne* species. The third paper deals with a study of the *strigata* group in the Chihuahuan and Sonoran Desert. The fourth paper will deal with some taxonomic problems in the yellow *Acarospora* of the Chihuahuan and Sonoran Desert.

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