**THE NEW GENUS *Pulvinora* (*Lecanoraceae*) WITH RELICT DISJUNCTIVE ALTAIAN**–**WESTERN NORTH AMERICAN DISTRIBUTION**

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During field studies in the Altai Mountains, Davydov and Yakovchenko collected material of a species with a combination of morphological and anatomical characters conspicuously different from other lichen genera currently known. Applying molecular methods, we confirmed that it belongs to Lecanoraceae and is related to the western North American *Lecanora pringlei*. The phylogenetic relationships of species in the *L. pringlei* group and their position within Lecanoraceae were analyzed based on ITS and nuLSU rDNA, as well as mtSSU DNA sequence data, resulting in the description of the new genus *Pulvinora,* combining two species – *P.* *pringlei* and a new species, *P. stereothallina*. The genus is distinguished by *Lecanora*-type asci, mycolecanorine apothecia soon becoming convex with an algal layer pushed below the hypothecium, and a pulvinate thallus with squamules at the tip of pseudopodetia-like, branched, pale brownish structures. *Lecanora subcavicola* and *L. pringlei* subsp. *brandegeei* do not belong to *Pulvinora*; consequently, we propose the new combination *Lecanora brandegeei* to accommodate the latter taxon. These results suggest that the distribution of *Pulvinora* represents a large disjunction between two mountain systems – Altai and Western North America. Similar disjunct distributions have previously been documented also for vascular plants, hepatics and lichens . Our studies thus support the hypothesis that Central Asian and North American alpine biota were connected at least during the Tertiary and might then have occupied a contiguous range from North America extending to Asia across the North Pole via Greenland.