

FOSTERING THE FRENCH CONNECTION: ZEALANDIAN JAW-MOTH BIOGEOGRAPHY

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Micropterigids are a world-wide family, known from New Zealand since 1863 and with 19 species now recorded. By 1985 three species had been recorded from New Caledonia but today the total is nearer 65 species, still with only five described. Almost all these Zealandian jaw-moths are in the genus *Sabatinca* and represent a prolific radiation on the 93% submerged continent of Zealandia. Molecular phylogenetic analysis of this fauna, with substantial fossil calibration, indicates that these tiny archaic moths are close to ideal organisms for historical biogeographic study. Their story offers not only clues to the history of these modern Zealandian islands from the opening of the Tasman Sea, to the possibility of land between New Zealand and New Caledonia, but also to the drowning myths concerning both modern islands and currently receiving much media attention... as well as some tempting French indulgence. This progress report summarises the contribution micro-jaw-moths can make to the historic biogeography of this region.

