

Remarkable sexual dimorphism in the Afrotropical species *Nycterimyia capensis* Bezzi, 1924 (Diptera: Nemestrinidae), and its taxonomic implications

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Abstract

Nycterimyia is a genus of poorly understood and rarely collected Nemestrinidae from scattered localities in the Afrotropical (two species), Oriental (four species) and Australasian (four species) Regions. The Afrotropical species *N. capensis* is a variable taxon currently recorded from South Africa, Kenya and Madagascar. This paper records a pair of *N. capensis* collected at the same date and locality (Ranomofana) in Madagascar. The female is the first known from the Afrotropics. There is marked sexual dimorphism in *N. capensis*; important characters separating the sexes include shape and length of the antennal style, length and distribution of pile on the thorax and abdomen, wing shape, and most importantly distinctive wing patterning. The taxonomic implications of not recognizing sexual dimorphism in the genus are discussed.

Key words: Nemestrinidae, *Nycterimyia capensis*, female, Afrotropical Region, sexual dimorphism

Introduction

Nycterimyia is a poorly understood and rarely collected genus of nemestrinid flies known from scattered localities in the Afrotropical, Oriental and Australasian Regions, including a number of islands/island chains such as the Andamans, the Rhio Archipelago, the Philippines and the Bismarck Archipelago (Bernardi 1973). In the Afrotropics *Nycterimyia* is readily distinguished from other genera by having a vestigial proboscis, patterned wings, ocelli present and the first and second antennal segments fused. In my recent paper (Barraclough 2005) revising the afrotropical fauna of *Nycterimyia*, only two species were recognized, namely the variable species *N. capensis*, as well as *N. bezzii* Lichtwardt, 1925. *N. capensis* was recorded from South Africa, Kenya and Madagascar,