



A remarkable new species of *Empidideicus* (Diptera: Mythicomyiidae) from Madagascar

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Abstract

A new species of *Empidideicus*, *E. rhinoclypeatus*, **n. sp.** from Madagascar is described and illustrated. It marks the first published description of a species of the genus from Madagascar. The new species is noteworthy in that it possesses a remarkable elongation of the clypeus. A key to species of *Empidideicus* from southern Africa, Sokotra, and Madagascar is presented.

Key words: *Empidideicus*, taxonomy, Madagascar, Mythicomyiidae, Diptera

Introduction

Recent surveys from Madagascar has resulted in the discovery of many new species of Mythicomyiidae. Previous to this study, only one described species [*Cyrtisiopsis ornatus* (Séguy)] was known from the island. The new species described here marks the first published description of a species of the genus from Madagascar [an undescribed species of the genus was recorded in Irwin *et al.* (2004) based on my studies]. Many other new species of *Empidideicus* from Madagascar (an estimated 20–30) await a full revision currently underway that will entail lengthy study. In order to make available results of the collecting from this survey in a more timely fashion for reporting purposes, the new species of *Empidideicus* below is described and illustrated.

Empidideicus rhinoclypeatus is remarkable for its elongation of the strongly sclerotized clypeus, forcing the long proboscis to be deflexed below the head as opposed to a more prognathus orientation in all other known *Empidideicus*. Other *Empidideicus* have the clypeus length no longer than the oral margin (*Empidideicus* s. str.) and partially or not sclerotized. This facial modification here is similar to the condition found in some other Diptera (e.g., *Thambemyia* [Dolichopodidae] and *Macrorrhynchus* [Keroplastidae]).

Greathead & Evenhuis (2001b) recorded 6 species of *Empidideicus* from southern Africa. Since then, *E. completus* (the type specimen was destroyed in 1956 and thought to be unrecognizable) has been found from additional material based on more detailed manuscript notes of Bezzi (see Greathead & Evenhuis 2004). The addition of *E. completus* and the new species described here plus the two Sokotra species described in Greathead & Evenhuis (2001a) brings the number of *Empidideicus* from “southern” Africa and surrounding areas to 10.