The flies of the family Hybotidae (Diptera, Empidoidea) collected during the Boyekoli Ebale Congo 2010 Expedition in Democratic Republic of Congo

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Abstract

Thirty-two species of Hybotidae (Diptera: Empidoidea) were collected during the Boyekoli Ebale Congo 2010 Expedition that took place in the Democratic Republic of Congo along the Congo River between Kisangani and Bumba. Only four species were known previously. Here we present new records for June 2010 at the beginning of the dry season.

Introduction

The present paper deals with the Hybotidae that were collected during the Boyekoli Ebale Congo 2010 Expedition. The expedition took place along the Congo River between Kisangani and Bumba (Kirk-Spriggs 2010) in May and June 2010 at the beginning of the dry season.

The Hybotidae found during the expedition belonged to only two subfamilies: Hybotinae (genera Syndyas Loew and Syneches Walker) and Tachydromiinae (genera Crossopalpus Bigot, Drapetis Meigen, Elaphropeza Macquart, Stilpon Loew, genus undescribed). The subfamily Hybotinae contains generally larger flies with a short proboscis pointing forward and usually possessing thickened hind legs that are supposed to be raptorial. The Tachydromiinae is large and very diverse comprising quite small (1.0 to 5.0 mm) predatory flies that are generally seen running on leaves of vegetation but also occur under many other conditions including tree-trunks, stones, sandy biotopes, etc. Their proboscis is also strong but pointing downward (Sinclair & Cumming 2006).

The current knowledge and taxonomic status of the Afrotropical Hybotidae is almost entirely due to the revision of the Southern African Empididae (s.l.) by Kenneth G.V. Smith (1969). The revision was based primarily on the collections of Brian Stuckenberg (housed in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum) and the Natural History Museum (London). Only a few other smaller studies have been done: Congo (Bezzi 1908; Collart 1934), Sierra Leone (Raffone 1986, 1990, 1994), Kenya, Madagascar (Shamshev & Grootaert 2009) and South Africa (Shamshev & Grootaert 2010).

Key words: Africa, D.R. Congo, Diptera, Hybotidae, new species