

An unusual new species of *Paracnephia* Rubtsov (Diptera: Simuliidae) from Western Australia

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ABSTRACT

Paracnephia gladiator is described from fast-flowing streams of the Jarrah Forest, Darling Plateau, Western Australia. Diagnostic characters are provided for all life stages after the egg. The generic assignment is tentative given the limited understanding of relationships among Gondwanan Simuliidae previously assigned to Prosimuliini. The M-shaped median sclerite of the male terminalia and the large calcipala suggest phylogenetic affinity with the Neotropical genera *Araucnephia* and *Araucnephioides*. The simple tarsal claw suggests that females are mammalophilic. Females are attracted to humans but do not bite.

Key words: Simuliidae, *Paracnephia*, taxonomy, relationships

Introduction

Only three black fly species — *Simulium ornatipes* Skuse, *S. furiosum* Skuse, and *S. bancrofti* Taylor — were known from Australia prior to Tonnoir's (1925) treatment of 14 species, including 10 described as new. Four of these new species were assigned to *Simulium* and the remaining six were placed in the new genus *Austrosimulium*, which was erected for the Australian and New Zealand species of *Simulium* whose adults have an antennal flagellum of eight (rarely seven) segments. Taylor (1927) provided further information on *Austrosimulium bancrofti* and described an additional species of *Simulium*. Drummond (1931) reported five species from Western Australia: *S. ornatipes*, *A. bancrofti*, *S. tonnoiri* n. sp., and two unidentified species. Wharton (1949) described *S. melatum*, a species later