

New specific synonymies and taxonomic notes on Neotropical blackflies (Diptera: Simuliidae)

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Abstract

In this paper we clarify the status of some poorly known blackfly species from the Neotropical Region. Information is provided about their depositories, their condition, and already-established synonyms. Fifteen new synonyms are established, two species are assigned to a different subgenus, and five lectotypes are designated based on an examination of type material. The following new synonyms are proposed: *Simulium tarsatum* Macquart (= *S. mexicanum* Bellardi, *S. seriatum* Knab, *S. aureopunctatum* Malloch, *S. placidum* Knab, *S. lugubre* Lutz & Nuñez Továr, *S. turgidum* Hoffmann, *Trichodagmia laticalx* Enderlein, *T. latidigitus* Enderlein, *S. bellardii* Py-Daniel & Moreira Sampaio); *S. nigrimanum* Macquart (= *T. spadacidorsum* Enderlein); and *S. townsendi* Malloch (= *S. chalcocoma* Knab, *T. ecuadoriensis* Enderlein, *T. latitarsis* Enderlein, *T. strigata* Enderlein, *S. muiscorum* Bueno, Moncada & Muñoz de Hoyos). Five lectotypes are designated for the following species names: *T. laticalx*, *T. latidigitus*, *T. spadacidorsum*, *T. ecuadoriensis* and *T. latitarsis*. Two species, *S. tarsale* Williston & *S. tarsatum* Macquart, previously unplaced in the genus *Simulium s.l.* are now assigned to the subgenus *Hemicnetha* Enderlein.

Key words: Simuliidae, Neotropical Region, taxonomy, new synonyms, type designation

Introduction

The family Simuliidae is represented by about 380 morphospecies in the Neotropical Region (Crosskey & Howard, 2004). Taxonomic knowledge on Neotropical blackflies has advanced significantly over the past 30 years as a result of the discovery of onchocerciasis foci in South America (Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela) (Shelley *et al.*, 1988a,b) with the need to identify vector species and understand the rôle of the different vectors in the transmission of the disease. Several new species have been described, often based on the belief that many new species would be present in previously unprospected isolated areas where the disease occurs and sometimes with no consultation or knowledge