

Rudimentary halteres of some flightless female Phoridae (Diptera) reassessed, and some taxonomic implications

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Abstract

The supposed rudimentary halteres of the flightless females of the Neotropical *Ecituncula halterata* Borgmeier and genus *Pulicimyia* Borgmeier are reinterpreted as wing rudiments. Consequently *E. halterata* is transferred to the genus *Ecitiphora* Schmitz, creating a junior synonym of *E. breviptera* Disney. *Pulicimyia* is synonymised with *Puliciphora* Dahl and the resulting *Puliciphora modesta* (Borgmeier) comb. nov. makes a homonym with the Afrotropical *P. modesta* (Disney), which is therefore renamed *P. etiamodesta* nom. nov. The replacement name *P. edaphomyia* nom. nov. is proposed for the Afrotropical *P. nigriventris* (Borgmeier), as the name is preoccupied by an older synonym of a widely distributed Old World species. The Neotropical *Homalophora epichaeta* Borgmeier is transferred to *Puliciphora*, with the consequent synonymy of *P. mexicana* Disney with this species. The Neotropical *P. sobria* Borgmeier is reported from the Nearctic Region, and *P. cavatica* Disney is synonymised with it. *P. jacquemarti* sp. nov. is described from Puerto Rico. A revised key to Nearctic *Puliciphora* females is provided.

Key words: Diptera, Phoridae, *Puliciphora*, *Ecitiphora*, *Ecituncula*, *Pulicimyia*, *Homalophora*, new species, synonyms, new combinations

Introduction

This paper was prompted by the re-examination of specimens associated with army ants (Rettenmeyer & Akre, 1968) that were identified by the late Thomas Borgmeier and sent to me by Dr Carl Rettenmeyer (Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, University of Connecticut). The procurement of fresh material of most Nearctic species of *Puliciphora* Dahl, sent by Dr Will Reeves (now at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia), provided a further incentive to update our knowledge of the New World species of this genus.