Zootaxa 1210: 1–25 (2006)
www.mapress.com/zootaxa/

ISSN 1175-5326 (print edition)
ZOOTAXA
ISSN 1175-5334 (online edition)

1210

Nine new species of *Megaselia* Rondani (Diptera: Phoridae) from the Seychelles

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Abstract

Nine new species of *Megaselia* are described from the Seychelles, some of which are sibling species of *M. mera* (Collin), whose hitherto unknown male is described. The new species are *M. birdensis*, *M. dilatimana*, *M. falsoluta*, *M. furculae*, *M. fuscamplicosta*, *M. pseudomera*, *M. seychellesensis*, *M. vannusetarum* and *M. vitiomera*. *Megaselia dilatimana* is recorded from Aldabra and Arabia as well.

Key words: Diptera, Phoridae, *Megaselia*, new species, new synonym, Seychelles, Aldabra, Arabia

Introduction

The genus *Megaselia* Rondani includes at least 45% of the known Phoridae, with about 1400 described species currently recognised. However, the complexities of this genus means that they are often put to one side when new taxa are being described. Possibly at most only about 10–20 % of the species have been documented. The best known phorid fauna is that of the British Isles (Disney, 1983, 1989, plus subsequent additions), in which about 70% of the species belong to *Megaselia*. Furthermore the boundaries of the genus are by no means clear.

It remains the case that a number of described genera of the tribe Gymnophorini, from other parts of the world, are probably no more than somewhat atypical *Megaselia*. The temptation to raise distinctive species groups to the generic level needs to be strongly opposed. The type species of the genus belongs to a distinctive segregate (Disney, 1995). Thus a policy of raising such groups to the generic level would be likely to change the names of more than 1300 species in due course. Such a programme of nomenclatural upheaval would serve the interests of nobody but the pedant. The affinities of clusters of

Accepted by N. Evenhuis: 22 Mar. 2006; published: 24 May 2006