



Mediterranean species of the *Medetera plumbella* species group with description of a new peculiar species from Morocco (Diptera: Dolichopodidae)

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Abstract

The *Medetera plumbella* species group in the Mediterranean Region is reviewed. It comprises seven species and one subspecies including a new species *Medetera varvara* Grichanov & Vikhrev **sp. nov.** from Morocco. The species is peculiar in its fore leg decoration and sand dune habitat. A check list and revised key to species of this species group are provided.

Key words: Dolichopodidae, Medeterinae, *Medetera*, Palearctic, Mediterranean Region, new species, key

Introduction

The genus *Medetera* Fischer von Waldheim, 1819, numbers now about 330 mostly Holarctic species, but we think hundreds of undescribed species populate tropical and subtropical belts of the World. *Medetera plumbella* species group was originally recognized as the genus *Oligochaetus* by Mik (1878) with the type species *Medeterus plumbellus* Meigen. Bigot (1890) later considered *Oligochaetus* a synonym of *Medetera*. Subsequent Old World workers treated the name as a subgenus of *Medetera* (e.g., Becker 1917) or an independent genus (e.g., Stackelberg 1937; Parent 1938), including in the latter genus the *plumbella*, *senicula*, *micacea* and *annulitarsa* species groups. Negrobov (1966) did not find any significant generic characters to distinguish *Oligochaetus* from *Medetera*, but he nevertheless coined the subgenera *Asioligochaetus* Negrobov, 1966, and *Lorea* Negrobov, 1966, for some of the Central Asian *Oligochaetus* species. Negrobov & Stackelberg (1972) published a key that incorporated all Palearctic species of *Medetera*. Bickel (1985, 1987) considered all the subgenera as no more than species groups of *Medetera*, and he placed the subgenera *Asioligochaetus* and *Lorea* in synonymy with *Medetera*. Members of the former *Oligochaetus* are also present in the Afrotropical Region (Grichanov 1997a, 1999). They have some relations to North American *petulca* group of species (Bickel 1985). Only one species of the *plumbella* group s.s. (*M. plumbella*) inhabits Europe, ranging from southern regions to the Scandinavian countries. Several species of this group were described from desert and semidesert areas of the Old World including North Africa, with some species collected from rodent holes (Stackelberg 1937; Grichanov *et al.* 2007).

Material and methods

Specimens examined in this study are deposited in the Zoological Museum of Moscow State University, Moscow (ZMU).