



Taxonomic status of *Nimbecera* Reiss, 1972, a junior synonym of *Tanytarsus* van der Wulp, 1874 (Diptera: Chironomidae)

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Abstract

In the past, the Nearctic *Tanytarsus limneticus* Sublette, 1964, as well as the Neotropical *T. rhabdomantis* (Trivinho-Strixino & Strixino, 1991) and *Caladomyia ortonii* Sæwedal, 1981 were erroneously placed in *Nimbecera* Reiss, 1972 due to the annulated Lauterborn organ pedicels of the larvae, a feature first thought to be unique to this genus. In the present paper, the systematic position of *T. limneticus*, *T. patagonicus* and *T. rhabdomantis* is discussed in detail. Complete morphological diagnoses of the adult males, pupae and larvae of *T. patagonicus* and *T. limneticus* are given, in addition to descriptions and drawings of the adult males and pupae of both species. As a result, *Nimbecera patagonica* Reiss, 1972, recorded from southern Chile and Argentina, is transferred to the genus *Tanytarsus* van der Wulp, 1874. The monotypic genus *Nimbecera* becomes a junior subjective synonym of *Tanytarsus*.

Key words: Diptera, Chironomidae, *Nimbecera*, *Tanytarsus*, new combination, synonymy, Neotropical Region

Introduction

Reiss (1972) described the genus *Nimbecera* based on larva, pupa and adult male of a single species, *Nimbecera patagonica*, from southern Chile and Argentina (Patagonia). The annulated Lauterborn organ pedicels were observed for the first time in the tribe Tanytarsini and was one of the characters used by Reiss to delimit *Nimbecera*.

This morphological character seemed to be so characteristic for the genus that further new *Nimbecera* species were described based on larval stage (Trivinho-Strixino & Sanseverino 2003). Steiner and Hulbert (1982) described the North American *Nimbecera pinderi*, but based on all life stages, the species was synonymised with *Tanytarsus limneticus* Sublette, 1964 (Epler 1992). In the same publication, Epler (1992) moved *T. limneticus* to *Nimbecera*, and thus *Nimbecera pinderi* became a junior synonym of *Nimbecera limnetica*. Later, Epler (1995) returned the species to the genus *Tanytarsus* (Caldwell *et al.* 1997). The Brazilian *Nimbecera rhabdomantis* and *N. paulensis* were described based on larvae by Trivinho-Strixino and Strixino (1991). After examination of reared pupae and adult males, *N. rhabdomantis* was transferred to the genus *Tanytarsus* (Trivinho-Strixino & Sanseverino 2003), while *N. paulensis* was synonymised with *Caladomyia ortonii* Sæwedal, 1981 (Trivinho-Strixino & Strixino 2003). *Nimbecera patagonica* is thus the only valid species in *Nimbecera*; all other species described later have been synonymised or placed in other genera (Trivinho-Strixino & Sanseverino 2003).

Epler (2001) pointed out that associations of life stages in several *Tanytarsus* species indicate that some of the characters used by Reiss (1972) to delimit *Nimbecera* may not hold as diagnostic characters for the genus. The features used to identify *Nimbecera* in the keys for Chironominae larvae and pupae (Pinder & Reiss 1983,