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The identity of *Tachina westermanni* Wiedemann, 1819 (Diptera: Calliphoridae or Tachinidae) with a solution to a nomenclatural problem

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Abstract

Tachina westermanni Wiedemann, 1819 was based on four syntypes, two conspecific calliphorids and two conspecific tachinids. Two existing but contradictory lectotype fixations have resulted in confusion as to the correct application of the specific name *westermanni* Wiedemann. Evidence is presented showing that the lectotype fixation of Townsend in 1931 is valid and assigns *westermanni* Wiedemann to the Calliphoridae, with *Pericallimya westermanni* as the valid binomen. The valid name for the tachinid taxon becomes *Brachelia westermanni* Robineau-Desvoidy, 1830 and a neotype is designated for it in the interests of nomenclatural stability.

Key words: Diptera, Calliphoridae, Tachinidae, zoological nomenclature, lectotype fixation, neotype designation, museum specimens, Afrotropical Region

Introduction

In the *Catalogue of the Diptera of the Afrotropical Region* (Crosskey 1980a) there are two taxonomic species based on the same nominal species, *Tachina westermanni* Wiedemann, 1819 from South Africa. The first is listed by Pont (1980: 795) in the Calliphoridae as *Pericallimya westermanni* (Wiedemann) and the second is listed by Crosskey (1980b: 846) in the Tachinidae as *Brachelia westermanni* (Wiedemann).

Tachina westermanni was described by Wiedemann (1819: 23) on the basis of an unstated number of males (“♂. Prom. bon. sp. [Promontorium Bonae Spei = Cape of Good Hope] Januario”). Subsequently it was included in the second part of his *Aussereuropäische zweiflügelige Insekten* (Wiedemann 1830: 291). Again, he gave no indication of the number of specimens he had before him, but this time stated that the material he examined was “In Westermann’s und meiner Sammlung.”. As will be explained below, Wiedemann had at least four specimens before him, thus all syntypes.

Zimsen (1954: 21) reported the existence of three specimens of *Tachina westermanni* in Westermann’s collection in ZMUC. In a footnote to the entry that is marked with an asterisk on p. 21, Zimsen (1954: 8) noted that one of the specimens was in a separate case from the two others.

The fourth known syntype was discovered by Brauer and Bergenstamm (1893: 96 [184], as “*Tachina Westermanni* Wd (II. 291)”) in von Winthem’s collection (“C. Wth.”) in NMW. It was reported to be identical with “*Pseudolöwia sycophanta* Schin.”, also in NMW. This specimen originally formed part of Wiedemann’s own collection (hence the expression “In [...] meiner Sammlung” in Wiedemann 1830), which subsequently was bought by von Winthem. Von Winthem’s collection was purchased by NMW in 1852 (O’Hara 2013) and his specimens are recognizable today by the printed “Coll. Winthem” label (Pont 1995).

It has been known for a long time that the syntypic series of *T. westermanni* is mixed and consists of two