

FLY TIMES



APRIL, 1990 - No. 6

1991 promises to provide a number of exciting events for Dipterists: the Society meeting in Arizona, the biting fly workshop in Florida, and at least an informal gathering in Reno, Nevada in December during the ESA meetings.

We again issue our invitation for you to send news of meetings, travels, moves, recent publications, and good collecting spots.

We also suggest that those who have not yet done so send a brief description of their interests on the form at the end of this newsletter. In addition, if any of you want to make changes to your entry, write and let us know for the next version of the Directory (likely in the spring of 1992).

All contributions to the next issue of this newsletter should continue to be sent to the following address. Deadline for the next issue is September 30, 1991.

Dr. Art Borkent,
2330 - 70th St. SE,
Salmon Arm, British Columbia,
V1E 4M3, Canada.

NEWS

"The Phylogenetic Relationships of the Diptera"

This international effort, as explained in the last newsletter, will provide a detailed examination of the evolution of the Diptera. Each chapter will give the most up to date synthesis of the cladistic relationships within each family of Diptera. Furthermore, all available fossil evidence will be incorporated to provide minimum dates for various nodes on proposed cladograms.

The response to our invitation to participate in this project has been outstanding. Of 156 families of Diptera, the

majority will have chapters written by experts in each group. The remaining families have no expert available and have never been interpreted cladistically.

Dr. Art Borkent (Managing editor)
 Dr. Jeff M. Cumming (Coeditor)
 Dr. Neil L. Evenhuis (Coeditor)
 Dr. Steve A. Marshall (Coeditor)
 Dr. D. Monty Wood (Coeditor)

North American Dipterists' Society

The next meeting of the Society will be held May 31 - June 2, 1991 at the Southwestern Research Station of the American Museum of Natural History, near Portal Arizona. For further information contact the following:

Dr. B.V. Brown,
 Dept. of Entomology,
 Smithsonian Institution,
 NHB 169,
 Washington, D.C.,
 20560, U.S.A.

(202) 382-1794.

First International Symposium on Tipulomorpha - Sept. 9-13, 1991

This symposium, as announced in our last newsletter, will examine the phylogenetic relationships within the Tipulomorpha.

It is important to note that the TIME OF THE SYMPOSIUM HAS BEEN CHANGED from Sept. 16-20, 1991.

The meeting will be held at the Institute of Animal Systematics and Evolution, Polish Academy of Sciences at Krakow, Poland. If interested in attending and/or in receiving the further information write to the following:

Ewa and Wieslaw Krzeminski,
 Institute of Animal Systematics and Evolution,
 Polish Academy of Sciences,
 ul. Slawkowska 17, 31-016 Krakow, Poland.
 Phone: Office - 22-19-01; Home - 55-27-41.

Report on Dipterists' Informal Conference and
Meeting of the North American Dipterists' Society
Brian Wiegmann - Organizer and Moderator

by Brian Wiegmann

A very successful informal conference for Dipterists' was held at the ESA meeting in New Orleans. This was the first time the dipterists' conference was given formal billing as a meeting of the North American Dipterists' Society. Thus, the precedent has been set for this forum serving as an annual meeting of the society, and it continues as a venue for the exchange of dipterological news and views. This year it was requested that the meeting remain informal in that paper titles were not submitted to the program. Several dipterists' have expressed the opinion that titles be submitted to the program in the future, at least in alternating years with the NADS field meeting.

Nonetheless, highlights of the meeting included a short report on the status of the tribe Mydini with an explanation of the current confusion over names in the group by Judith Welch, an update on work in progress by Curtis Sabrosky on his catalogue of family and order group names in Diptera, and beautiful slides of robberflies, and many other insects of Texas, taken by Riley Nelson. Chris Thompson also explained the current proposal to the International Congress of Dipterology for the stabilization of Diptera names in use. Brian Brown announced arrangements for the 2nd meeting of the North American Dipterists' Society at the Southwestern Research Station in Portal with excellent slides of the station, and Steve Marshall announced plans for the Third International Congress of Dipterology to be held at Guelph, Ontario August 15-19 1994. Marshall also announced progress on plans for a collaborative, multiauthored "compendium of cladograms" that will bring into a single volume current phylogentic hypotheses for every dipteran family. There was much useful discussion, and the meeting was adjourned to more traditional meeting sites. In all, the meeting made for a very enjoyable evening and all Dipterists' should plan to attend the next informal conference at the ESA National Meeting in Reno, Nevada, Dec. 1991.

The Annual Biting Fly Workshop - May 16-18, 1991

This exciting meeting will take place in Gainesville, Florida at the labs of the new University of Florida Entomology Building. For further information contact the following:

Dr. H.V. Weems,
 Florida State Collection of Arthropods,
 Bureau of Entomology,
 Florida Department of Agriculture,
 Division of Plant Industry,
 P.O. Box 1269,
 Gainesville, Florida,
 32602, U.S.A.

Study of Ecological Impact of Yellowstone Fires

by Dr. Robert Lavigne

A group of us at the University of Wyoming are involved in a project studying the effects of the 1988 fires in Yellowstone National Park on the insect fauna. We are looking at a number of ecological parameters, especially as regards the litter fauna. In addition, we are building a collection of insects to be housed in Yellowstone National Park headquarters at Mammoth Springs. For this purpose, we need identifications of collected material, particularly of Diptera. We would greatly appreciate hearing from Dipterists who would be willing to identify material for us. Loans can be made through:

Dr. Robert Lavigne or Dr. Scott Shaw
 Rocky Mountain Systematic Entomology Laboratory
 PSIS Dept, P.O. Box 3354, University Station
 Laramie, WY 82071, USA

New Project and Request for Material - Brian V. Brown

I am beginning a revision of the Nearctic species of ant-decapitating flies, genus Apocephalus Coquillett (Diptera: Phoridae). I would appreciate a loan of any material of this genus for my revisionary work. Note that to identify specimens I need to dissect male and female terminalia. Please send material to the following address:

Dr. B.V. Brown,
 Dept. of Entomology,
 Smithsonian Institution,
 NHB 169,
 Washington, D.C.,
 20560, U.S.A.

A Checklist of Nearctic Tabanidae

by John F. Burger

It has been 25 years since publication of the North American Diptera Catalog. During the intervening years, numerous changes in the taxonomy of North American Tabanidae have occurred, as well as extensions of distribution. There are currently 333 valid taxa placed in 25 genera.

I have prepared a new "checklist" of the family Tabanidae for the Nearctic Region in the same format as that in the Diptera Catalog. This checklist includes all changes in the taxonomic status of species, based on revisions since 1965, the most recent information on distribution, as well as current opinions regarding placement of taxa by specialists. Graham B. Fairchild (FSCA, Gainesville) and L. L. Pechuman (Cornell University) generously provided opinions and information regarding placement of species and the status of many "varieties" listed in the 1965 catalog. The checklist is current through December, 1990.

Interested persons can obtain a hard copy of this checklist. It is also available on disk. The file is currently on a 3.5" high density disk, IBM-compatible format, in WordPerfect 5.1 (30 March 1990 Release). It will be updated continuously. Hard copy is in Bitstream "Dutch" 12 pt. PS format. This file or a hard copy can be obtained by contacting:

John F. Burger
Department of Entomology
Nesmith Hall
University of New Hampshire
Durham, NH 03824
(603) 862-1707

redacted Far Side, 6/9/1988

redacted Far Side, date unknown

Third International Congress of Dipterology 1994 --
Time to Get Things Rolling!

by Steve Marshall

As you know, ICD3 will be held at University of Guelph in August 15-19, 1994. The core committee for the Congress is made up of all the "local" dipterists I could shanghai ... Monty Wood (treasurer), Terry Wheeler (editor), John Swann (local arrangements), Jeff Cumming, Jim O'Hara, Brian Brown, Brad Sinclair and Rob Cannings (Rob is moving to Guelph to start his PhD on Asilidae this August). Graham Griffiths is also on the committee as liaison with Council for International Congresses of Dipterology.

In addition to this basic organizing committee, I set out to divide the Congress into as many sections or workshops as practical, and to find colleagues within reasonable telephoning distance to take responsibility for these sections. The logic for this seemed, and still seems, quite clear. Rather than my identifying and contacting the key international participants in diverse fields such as physiology and medical dipterology, it would be ideal to find volunteers to take responsibility for single subject areas. Each volunteer would serve as a contact person for that section, communicating with key people and organizing the section structure. This type of organization would take a lot of responsibility off my shoulders, and ensure careful, informed attention to each subject area. With this in mind, I distributed a preliminary first circular listing a number of potential sections/workshops and potential organizers. The full list will be coming out in the next FLYER, so I won't repeat it here. My purpose in writing this article is instead to deal with two particular problems that have emerged so far. The first one is simple - we need some volunteers and more subject areas. Of the areas suggested in the first circular, we failed to find volunteers for morphology, genetics, or forensic dipterology. Many important taxa, such as Chironomidae, Ceratopogonidae and Culicidae were also not covered. I would certainly appreciate someone coming forward to cover these areas or to cover additional subject areas not yet included.

The other problem I think I need to address here is the perception that this particular organizational structure means that we are trying to run a North American Congress rather than an International Congress. A number of people responded to the preliminary first circular with rather strong objections to a list of section organizers made up almost entirely of northern North Americans, many of whom are not "big names". It was argued, in one case quite vehemently, that this will "definitely turn off potential participants from countries that are already sensitive to the strongman attitude of North Americans to the rest of the world", and that "such unknowns will not draw the dynamic guys in for a great symposium". I disagree with the latter point - the scientist who declines a request for participation because it comes from a postdoctoral student probably isn't worth listening to anyhow. The danger of turning off potential international participants does scare me, however, and warrants further comment.

I hope that spreading the organization over a group of North American specialists will actually lead to **greater** international participation. Each of the volunteers taking responsibility for a subject area will be able to identify and contact the people world wide who can make for a dynamic symposium or section, and will be able to stay in touch with the international community as well as the Congress chairman throughout the organizational process. Furthermore, I hope that all the people involved with organizing sections/workshops will realize the desirability of arranging for chairmen or keynote speakers from outside North America. The eventual list of chairmen and keynote speakers must have an international balance. The main objective of this Congress is to foster cooperation among the international community of dipterists, and I sincerely hope that my choice of organizational structures will facilitate, not hinder, this goal.

Connecticut Diptera Collections

by Chris T. Maier

I increasingly have become concerned about how many systematists bypass the insect collection at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), New Haven, when they do revisionary work. The CAES, the Peabody Museum of Yale University, and the University of Connecticut are the major state institutions with Diptera collections. The insect collection at CAES has considerable historical significance because it was the basis for the "Check-list of the Insects of Connecticut" authored by Britton (1920, 1938). In addition, many of the distributional records given in the series "Diptera or True Flies of Connecticut" were obtained from specimens in the CAES collection.

Also housed at CAES is my private collection of Diptera, which has a large number of Rhagionidae (ca. 1000), Tabanidae (ca. 2000), and Syrphidae (ca. 5000). In addition, I have a moderate number of Stratiomyoidea, Asiloidea, Bombyliodea, and Conopoidea. Most of my specimens were collected in Connecticut during the last 14 years by using a hand-held net (mostly flower visitors), Malaise traps (operated continuously from April to October for 8 years), and dry ice-baited canopy traps. My collection was the basis for the Rhagionidae of Connecticut (Maier and Webb 1987) and will be the foundation for upcoming faunistic works on the Tabanidae and (hopefully) the Syrphidae of Connecticut.

Specimens in the CAES and my collection are available for loan. Please contact me about your needs for revisionary and other work, particularly if the group to be studied occurs in the northeastern United States. When you request material, please include synonyms for genera and species because most specimens in the CAES collection bear names that were used in the 1930's and 1940's.

Chris T. Maier
Department of Entomology
Connecticut Agric. Exp. Sta.
P.O. Box 1106
New Haven, CT 06504

Texas Across the River: Flies East of the Brazos

by Riley Nelson

Texas includes a wide variety of plant communities which harbor a wonderful assortment of flies and other insects. I've been collecting for some time now on the edge of the Edwards Plateau in central Texas. I've been collecting all the flies I can here and interested individuals can contact me if particular type localities need to be visited. Last April Dr. Richard Baumann and I took a collecting trip to the Piney Woods of East Texas, in search of stoneflies (Plecoptera) and Asilidae. While the Plecoptera collecting was less than astounding I found the flies abundant and diverse. We concentrated our efforts in and around the four National Forests of the area: Sam Houston, Davey Crockett, Sabine, and Angelina. We were pleased to find good collecting sites which were easily accessible. We concentrated on public land because Texans are notorious for enforcing trespass rules, but had no problems whatsoever with local folk. We contacted several landowners and they informed us in their pleasant east Texas drawl that: Hep ersef to dos goul dern bawgs, mani a siu wan, ya'llkin take em.

As we were particularly interested in stoneflies and riparian Diptera we concentrated our efforts along streams. Based on the phenology of the stoneflies we collected, we were near the peak of spring collecting in this area. I hope to get back to this area again a little later in the season. All the streams we visited were soft-bottomed, I saw few rocks during our whole trip. Evidently whoever coined the phrase "Everything's big in Texas" was not referring to east Texas rock.

We could easily have stayed in several of the National Forest campgrounds. There were few people in the woods this time of year and facilities were good. The National Forest maps were very useful in locating good streams. Additionally the state of Texas publishes a county by county atlas which costs \$10 for the previous years edition. It is well worth the money if you are planning any work in this area. With regards to collecting flies, I was most pleased with the following localities:

Texas, Walker Co., Sam Houston National Forest, Roark Creek, Road 207 10 miles East of Huntsville. We collected extensively here in a disorganized stack of pine logs and branches which had probably been cut down a year or two earlier. The hornet (Vespula) mimicking robber fly, Laphria saffrana was abundant here perching on the ground and low vegetation. Other laphriine flies included two other Laphria and Andrenosoma. We also collected numerous syrphids, especially another Vespula mimic, Milesia. After seeing this site we often concentrated in areas of downed timber and had much success with laphriines which feed on beetle larvae in the galleries mined in relatively fresh logs.

Texas, San Jacinto Co., Coldspring, Highway 250, "The Gulley." Ask anyone around town how to get to this spot, which is an informal nature area. We saw no copperhead snakes although the locals warned us repeatedly of them. Several seeps enter a small pond in the bottom of "The Gulley". In one of these seeps I caught a good series of the ptychopterid Bittacomorpha. I also caught a reasonable number of empidids and tipulids.

Texas, San Jacinto Co., Sam Houston National Forest, Big Creek Scenic Area, Big Creek. This area had a larger stream with a few seep tributaries entering it. Many fungi were apparent and had several fly families associated with them.

Texas, Houston Co., Davey Crockett National Forest, Wood Spring Branch Elm Creek, Highway 7, 1 mile West of Kennard. We followed the small meandering stream for quite a distance through the understory of open pine woods. Good numbers and variety of Nematocera were collected in the wet seeps. I also managed to get more laphriines.

Texas, Sabine Co., Sabine National Forest, Moss Creek near Red Hills Lake Campground, 2 miles North of Milam. This locality provided a good assortment of microhabitats and the proximity to the campground make it a place to which I will return.

Texas, Angelina Co., Bayou Springs Creek, road 2743, 5 miles East of Zavalla. Several flattened streams cross road 2743 in this area. We were particularly pleased to get a long series of bittacids here along with the assorted Laphria and other robber flies.

Texas, Jasper Co., Angelina National Forest, Boykin Spring Campground. This is a great spot! The campground was nice and the collecting excellent. The large springs came up from some loose rock then continued into a narrower channel. I strongly suggest visiting this site whenever you pass through this area. We collected a good number of stoneflies here, an indication of a relatively pristine habitat.

Texas, Jasper Co., Sandy Creek, Highway 777, Beech Grove. This area was an indication of what the Big Thicket was like. We didn't get enough time to collect extensively in this area but I will return.

The National Forests of East Texas are composed of much "agricultural timber", but it is not as simple a monoculture as I had expected. It is indeed clearcut on a regular basis but clearcutting is done in a patchwork fashion yielding many ecotones with various stages of succession represented. It may well be that this is ideal habitat for many species of robber flies and other groups. Other than forestry I saw little evidence of widespread agriculture with associated and detrimental pesticide use. I was pleasantly surprised by the good collecting we had. Please contact me for some more collecting suggestions if you plan a trip to this area.

Workshop held on "Feeding in Larval Mosquitoes"

by Richard W. Merritt

In connection with the Fifth Annual Meeting of the European Branch of the Society for Vector Ecology, held in Uppsala, Sweden on Sept. 7-8, 1990, a workshop was held on "Feeding in Larval Mosquitoes". The workshop was organized by Dr. Christine Dahl, Univ. of Uppsala, and the other participants were: Dr. Doug Craig, Mr. Ken Fry, Univ. of Alberta, Canada; Dr. Richard Merritt, Dr. Ned Walker, Michigan State University; Dr. Lena Petersen, Dr. Jean Lacoursiere, Univ. of Lund, Sweden; Dr. Marshall Laird, New Zealand; Dr. Alan Clements, London School of Trop. Med. & Hyg., England; Mr. Lars Widahl, Mr. Lars Bern, Univ. Uppsala, Sweden. The conference included films on larval feeding behavior of Anopheles and Culicine mosquitoes, as well as talks and discussions on behavior, food, larval feeding mechanisms, nutrition and hydrodynamics.

Black Fly Workers Take Note!!

Dr. Douglas Davies (Dept. of Biology, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario) wrote to point out that the Second Argentine Congress of Entomology is hosting the "Primera Reunion Latinamericana sobre Simulidos" from December 3-6, 1991 in La Cumbre, Cordoba, Argentina. If interested write to the following:

Dr. S. Coscaron,
Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y
Univ. Nacional de La Plata,
Paeo del Boque S/N,
La Plata, 1900,
Argentina.

Moves

Dr. Brian V. Brown has been uprooted from his home in Alberta by successfully completing his Ph.D. He has now taken up a two-year NSERC postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Maryland and the Smithsonian Institution. His new address is as follows:

Dr. B.V. Brown,
Dept. of Entomology,
Smithsonian Institution,
NHB 169,
Washington, D.C.,
20560, U.S.A.

Retirement of Dr. J.R. (Dick) Vockeroth

Dick Vockeroth has retired from employment with the Research Branch of Agriculture Canada. After 42 years of research, collecting, identifying and digging through library stacks in Ottawa, he will be pulling his stakes and moving to Vancouver, British Columbia. The last page of this newsletter is a composite production by Barry Flahey (artist) and Jeff Cumming made for Dick's retirement party and which is included for the enjoyment of all.

Books and Publications

Cooper, B.E. 1991. Diptera types in the Canadian National Collection of Insects. Part 1. Nematocera. Agriculture Canada, Research Branch, Publication 1845/B, iii + 113 pp.

This publication provides detailed description of the types of Nematocera in the CNC, including 654 holotypes, 188 associated allotypes, 5 allotypes, 36 lectotypes, and 1 neotype. 52 species are represented by syntypes, 423 by paratypes and 40 by paralectotypes. For each included species there is a description of the type status (holotype, allotype, paratype, syntype), full label data and remarks on the preservation, status, subsequent treatment of the name of the type material.

A bibliography and an index to included taxa are also provided.

Copies are available from the following address:

Canadian Government Publishing Centre,
Supply and Services Canada,
Ottawa, Ontario,
K1A 0S9, Canada.

Rubtsov, I.A. 1989. Blackflies (Simuliidae). 2nd edition. Amerind Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi. xxviii + 1042 pp.

This english translation of Rubtsov's 1956 work originally published in Russian, will be useful to numerous North American workers.

Smith, K.G.V. 1989. An introduction to the immature stages of British flies: Diptera larvae with notes on eggs, puparia and pupae. Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects, Vol. 10, part 14. 280 pages. Price: £32, plus £2 postage. Available from: Natural History Museum Publications, Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 5BD, United Kingdom.

This excellent book provides an extensive introduction to immature Diptera, with keys to families (and sometimes lower categories) occurring in Britain.

For those who have not yet sent in a synopsis of their interests for the Directory of North American Dipterists, the following form is provided. Please restrict yourselves to no more than 20 words when listing the titles of your major projects and the animals you work with.

The completed form may be sent to Dr. J.M. Cumming, Biosystematics Research Centre, Agriculture Canada, Research Branch, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0C6, Canada.

Should any of you like to expand on your interests and projects, feel free to send in a contribution that can be inserted into the next newsletter as a separate item.

Full name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

BITNET: _____

Projects and Taxa Studied: _____



*There once was a man who digressed
 And for a wager he even undressed
 After streaking the halls
 Despite hiding his
 It's rumoured he's very well blessed*

*Young Dick also sweeps and drinks beer
 With collecting methods more than just queer
 The neighbours start clucking
 When his aspirator's sucking
 In bus shelters quite near here*

*Now that his life's just beginning
 He'll catch up on reading and pinning
 More time to go down
 To the bookshops in town
 And to the "Barefax" for some sinning*

*Dick's a leader among non-objectors
 Surviving at least six directors
 After forty two years
 We'll choke back the tears
 As he joins those retired collectors*

The following unwittingly contributed to the production of this card

Calliphora vomitoria
 Lucilia illustris
 Lejops chrysostomus
 Parhelophilus laetus
 Eristalis tenax
 Homo sapiens vockerothi
 Rambo irritans

Good luck, Dick, and all the best!!!