

NOTE

Two additions to the list of phorid flies (Diptera: Phoridae) reported from the USA

Although the faunas of rain forests and other tropical wildlands are well-known to be poorly explored, the insect diversity of highly disturbed urban backyards are almost equally unknown. Sampling urban backyards is expected to reveal a large number of surprises, as introduced insects from around the world are discovered living among plants and soil imported from their home countries.

We report here on two species of fungus-breeding phorid flies collected in an urban backyard in California by BVB and sent to RHLD. Both are new additions to the list of Phoridae reported from the Nearctic Region.

The specimens were collected in a Malaise trap in a backyard garden in Brentwood, California (34.07°N, 118.49°W) and were preserved in alcohol. One specimen of each species was subsequently mounted on slides (Disney 2001) and deposited in the Cambridge University Museum of Zoology; the rest are in the collection of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Chonocephalus bentacaisei
(Santos Abreu)

Heterophora bentacaisei Santos Abreu 1921: 82 (male only).

Chonocephalus bentacaisei (Santos Abreu). Santos Abreu and Schmitz 1934: 69.

Chonocephalus madagascariensis Paulian 1958: 12 (female). Disney in press.

This species belongs to a genus in which the females are flightless and are transported by the winged males during their nuptial flights. A male was collected in a

Malaise trap that operated 15–17 January 2008. This species has previously been reported from the Canary Islands, Madagascar, and the Comoros Islands (Disney 2002, 2005). With the recent synonymy of *C. madagascariensis* with *C. bentacaisei* (Disney, in press), it follows that the female of the latter species is no longer unknown, as it was described by Paulian. Nevertheless, his description does not serve to distinguish it from the females of several other species. However, he did report that he had reared the species from fungi.

Specimens of *C. bentacaisei* can be identified using the key to species of the Holarctic Region given by Disney (2002).

Megaselia scutellaris (Wood)

Phora scutellaris Wood 1909: 120.

Phora pulicaria Fallén forma *luteicornis* Strobl 1910: 122.

Aphiochaeta scutellariformis Schmitz 1926: 83. Disney 1985: 245.

Two males were collected 15–17 January 2008 and two more 9–13 February 2008. One was slide-mounted by RHLD, and the two others were slide-mounted by BVB. They differ from typical specimens by not having a differentiated bristle on the left side of the epandrium (see fig. 414 in Disney 1983). However, the species is somewhat variable, and RHLD has a few European specimens that also lack the differentiated bristle.

This species is widespread in Europe, from Ireland to Portugal and eastwards to Albania and Russia west of the Urals. It has been reared from the sporophores of species of the following genera of fungi: *Agaricus* L., *Amanita* Dill. ex Boehm, *Boletus* L., *Collybia* (Fr.) Staude, *Cortinarius* (Pers.) Gray, *Dermoloma* J.E.

Lange ex Herink, *Gyroporus* Quél., *Hygrophorus* Fr., *Ionocybe* (Fr.) Fr., *Lepista* (Fr.) W.G. Sm., *Megacollybia* Kotl. & Pouzar, *Mycena* (Pers.) Roussel, *Rozites* P. Karst., *Russula* Pers., *Suillus* P. Micheli ex Adans., and *Tricholoma* (Fr.) Staude (summarized in Disney 1994; newer records in Disney and Evans 1999; Sevcik 2001, 2006). A *Dinotrema* sp. (Braconidae, Alysiniinae) has been reared from the pupae (Disney 1994).

In the most recent key to North American *Megaselia* (Borgmeier 1964, 1965), this species can key to either Borgmeier's Group VII or Group VIII, as the costa ranges from 0.43–0.44 in the two specimens BVB examined. In Group VII, the specimens key to *M. postcrinata* Borgmeier, but *M. scutellaris* differs in having an elongate midtarsomere 5 (which is longer than midtarsomere 4, an unusual character in *Megaselia*). The same character separates *M. scutellaris* from the species in Group VIII, especially those in couplet 11 to which it keys.

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