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N. G. Olsufyev: Slepni. Semeystvo Tabanidae. (Horse flies. Family Tabanidae). *Fauna of the USSR, Vol. VII, No 2, Publ. House Nauka, Leningrad 1977, 434 pp., 358 Figs. Price 5.27 R.*

The publication of Prof. N. G. Olsufyev, doctor of biological sciences, a well-known Soviet specialist in horse flies, summarizes hitherto information on the significant family of Diptera from the USSR, mainly from a major part of the Palearctic region. Horse flies, the blood-sucking parasites of mammals, vectors of causative agents of many serious diseases including infections dangerous to man, are spread all over inhabited continents and are numerous or abundant in many regions. They are of great medical, veterinary and economic importance. The present monograph dealing with horse flies of the USSR shows a rapid development of studies of the family since the first monograph on horse flies of the USSR written by the same author has been published in 1937.

The introductory section of the book gives an account of a brief history of the horse fly research in the USSR provided with monographs from the individual regions of the country, and includes significant works on systematics, faunistics and ecology. Also general characteristics of the family, morphology and anatomy both of adults and the developmental stages, phylogenesis, classification and variability of horse flies are presented.

A large chapter of the first section is devoted to the geographical distribution and origin of the horse fly fauna. It includes the general data on the horse fly fauna from the Palearctic region, typology (classification of the horse fly ranges from the aspects of landscape types and zoogeographical regions), zoogeographical division and a remarkable study on the horse fly paleogenesis of the Palearctic region.

Subsequent chapter cover biology of horse flies, their harmful action, number of horse flies in the different landscapes of the USSR, their seasonal number and their medical and veterinary importance. Final chapters of the introductory section deal with the collecting, colonization, determination and methods of horse fly control. The general section of the book is completed by a long list of local and foreign bibliography.

The second part of the book is devoted to systematics of horse flies. It includes keys for determination of the subfamilies, genera and species, descriptions of higher systematic units with synonymy and taxonomy, descriptions of the individual species (variability including), their geographical distribution and some occasional notes on the species systematics. Descriptions are given of 189 species, 39 subspecies and 17 varieties of horse flies in the USSR fauna belonging to 3 subfamilies and 13 genera (Pangoninae — 2 genera, Chrysopsinae — 2 genera, Tabaninae — 9 genera), 85 % of species belong to 5 genera: *Chrysops, Tabanus, Atylotus, Hybomitra* and *Haematopota*. With all species there are figures of the characteristic features and with most of them also the species distribution in the whole Palearctic region, which are of great value.

Systematic part is based on contemporary literature, nomenclature, knowledge of taxonomy and studies of the type material. There are only several deviations from the present state of horse fly taxonomy. In the systematically complicated group of the related species "*montana*" (genus *Hybomitra*), Olsufyev places the species *H. tuxeni* Lyneborg, 1959, later (1961) identified by Lyneborg as *H. tropica* (Linné, 1758), in the species *H. montana* (Meigen, 1820). The author considers the name *H. tropica* (Linné) to be nomen oblitum. The species *H. tropica* L. has been redescribed according to the type and separated from other species of this group, including the species *H. montana* Mg. (Chvála, Lyneborg and Moucha 1972). The studies of the type material show that the species *H. lapponica* (Wahlberg, 1848) mentioned by Olsufyev is now considered to be the synonym of *H. borealis* (Fabricius, 1781), while under the name of *H. borealis* Loew or *H. borealis* Meigen the species designated as *H. kaurii* Chvála et Lyneborg, 1970 has been used. As for the species *Chrysops pictus* Meigen, 1820, the author considers the former name *Ch. viduatus* (Fabricius, 1794), hitherto used by some authors in harmony with the contemporary nomenclature rules, to be nomen oblitum. In this case, however, it could be preferable to claim *Ch. pictus* as nomen conservandum). These remarks serve for specification of some vague questions of the horse fly taxonomy, which could be encountered by specialists while studying this book.

Prof. Olsufyev's book comprehensively presents the family Tabanidae from a major part of the Palearctic region and thus may be regarded as a unique monograph of this significant group of insects. The book of an experienced author reveals a deep knowledge of problems of phylogenesis, zoogeography and ecology of horse flies. Good arrangement and graphic figures will contribute to a broader practical use of the book which will surely become one of the basic works for further research of this economically and medicaly significant group of insects.

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