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***Anopheles cinereus* Theobald 1901 and its synonym *hispaniola* Theobald 1903**

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The first descriptions of *Anopheles cinereus* referred to material collected in Zimbabwe (Theobald, 1901) and Yemen (Patton, 1905). Those of *An. hispaniola* were of material from Spain (Theobald, 1903) and Algeria (Theobald, 1907). Differentiation is difficult, if not impossible (Mattingly & Knight, 1956), but the separate distributions of *cinereus* (Arabian Peninsula, Ethiopia and Sudan to Cape Province) and *hispaniola* (Mediterranean region, Equatorial Africa) (Knight & Stone, 1977) were assumed to meet in the central Africa region and Sahara, where local morphological variation was thought to represent the presence of intergrades (Gillies & de Meillon, 1968).

Senevet & Rioux (1960) concluded that the limited morphological differences warranted reducing the status of *hispaniola* to a subspecies of *cinereus*. Gillies & de Meillon (1968), whilst not disputing this reasoning, were more cautious and preferred to await further evidence.

Dahl & White (1978) consigned the name *hispaniola* to synonymy with *cinereus* and this action was acknowledged in the Addendum to the Second supplement of the *Catalog of the mosquitoes of the world* (Ward, 1984).

The only record of the taxon in Portugal was by Ribeiro *et al.* (1980), who compared their Portuguese specimens with the descriptions of *hispaniola* and *cinereus*. They concluded that morphological differences were insufficient for the two taxa to be regarded as separate species. Accordingly, they changed the ranking of *hispaniola* from species (not synonym) to subspecies of *cinereus*, making no mention of the prior synonymy by Dahl & White, which they appear not to have seen. This action was acknowledged in the Third supplement of the *Catalog of mosquitoes of the world* (Ward, 1992).

Morphological variation occurs in some of the characters mentioned in the original descriptions of *cinereus* and *hispaniola* and also in other characters (Raffaële & Coluzzi, 1961; Gillies & de Meillon, 1968; Holstein *et al.*, 1970; Ribiero *et al.*, 1980; Ramsdale & de Zulueta, 1983; Ramsdale, 1991). This variation is not confined to populations from opposite ends of the combined distribution. Population genetic studies (cytogenetic and/or iso-enzyme analysis) may eventually show that *cinereus* is a species complex. No such work has yet been undertaken but there seems to be general acceptance that these nominal taxa cannot be reliably separated on morphological grounds.

The action of Ribeiro *et al.* (1980) was based on a situation which no longer existed. Also it did not take into account morphological variation, not figured in the original descriptions, distinguishing other geographical populations which might equally be candidates for subspecies. The correct course, therefore, is to follow the prior action of Dahl & White (1978) and, until irrefutable evidence to the contrary is produced, to continue to regard the name *hispaniola* as a junior primary, synonym of *cinereus*.

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