

The names of European mosquitoes: Part 1

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This article is the first in a series to be published in the *Bulletin* to add meaning to the names of European mosquitoes. For each entry the name of the taxon is given together with the author and date and the reference to the original description. Next, where appropriate, a brief explanation of the etymology is provided. There is also either a quotation from the original description, translated where necessary, or a résumé indicating the author's reason for using the name in question. In some cases the explanation is not clear and correspondence to the author is invited and additional information will be included in future issues of the *Bulletin* as letters to the editors.

The names European mosquitoes have been coined for a variety of reasons. Some describe a precise or general morphological characteristic e.g. *geniculatus* and *cinereus* respectively; others their nuisance and biting qualities (e.g. *molestus*); several are patronymics (e.g. *labranchiae*). Localities from which the types were described also feature (e.g. *caspius*) while some names differentiate them from near-relatives e.g. *Neoculex*. Some names indicate the habitat in which the type was located (e.g. *mariae*); some describe the sound that they produce (e.g. *pipiens*), and there are names indicating common occurrence (*communis*) and that they are simply gnats (*Culex*).

These scientific names are a mixture of descriptive terms in Latin, sometimes from Greek origins, and Latinized versions of the names of people and places. Of the descriptive names some are straightforward Latin words e.g. *pipiens* (piping) while others are of Greek origin e.g. *Aedes* (troublesome). Some names are more complex, being derived from several Latin or Greek words. Examples of such compounded names are *atroparvus* from the Latin *ater* (black) and *parvus* (small) and *Orthopodomyia* from the Greek *orthos* (straight), *podos* (of foot) and *myia* (fly). Names dedicated to people and places are varied in their construction. Thus a variety of suffixes are used following the names of people, from the expected masculine genitive *richiardi* showing that the species was named after Richiardi to the feminine genitive ending of *messeae* for a masculine Italian, Alessandro Messea. Likewise connections with geographic areas are often denoted by the use of "-ensis" suffix (e.g. *alaskaensis*).

Here are a few for this issue:

Anopheles Meigen, 1818

Meigen, J.W. (1818) *Systematische Beschreibung der Bekannten Europäischen Zweiflügeligen Insekten*. I. xxxvi + 334 pp. Aachen. Forstmann.

Greek, *anopheles* = useless, troublesome

Meigen defines his genus in the last line of his description on page 10 saying that the name *Anopheles* means troublesome "Der Namen *Anopheles* bedeutet beschwerlich". He titles the description "Gabelmücke ANOPHELES", literally forked or bifurcate gnat, used in the sense of describing the mouthparts.

Anopheles algeriensis Theobald, 1903

Theobald, F.V. (1903) *A monograph of the Culicidae or mosquitoes*. 3. xvii+359 pp. London. British Museum (Natural History).

Theobald describes his species on page 21, but his only references to Algeria are "Habitat-Algeria (Dr. Sergent)." and the caption to his Figure 9 "Wing of *Anopheles Algeriensis*. n.sp. Algeria."

Anopheles atroparvus van Thiel, 1927

Van Thiel, P.H. (1927) Sur l'origine des variations de taille de l'*Anopheles maculipennis* dans les Pays Bas. *Bulletin de la Société de Pathologie exotique* 20, 366-390.

Latin, *atro* (*ater*) = black; *parvus* = small

On page 389, van Thiel names his variety "je propose pour le type de Bolsward (Friesland, Holland) le nom de *Anopheles maculipennis*, MEIGEN var. *atroparvus* nov. var." He notes that the Bolsward population are small, "...

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plus petite que le type ..." and that there is a colour difference, "la couleur est plus foncée que cheq le type ..." and (page 385) "les segments (partie ventrale) sont grisâtres avec les parties posterieures plus foncées, souvent noires."

Anopheles beklemishevi Stegnii & Kabanova 1976

Stegnii, V.N. & Kabanova, V.M. (1978) Cytoecological study of indigenous populations of the malaria mosquito in the territory of the USSR. 1. Identification of a new species of *Anopheles* in the *maculipennis* complex by the cytodagnostic method. *Meditinskaya Parazitologiya i Parazitarnye Bolezni* 45, 192-198.

On Page 198 this species is dedicated to the Russian scientist Vladimir Nikolaievitch Beklemishev "In honour of the distinguished Soviet scientist and malariologist V.N. Beklemishev, the authors name the new species *Anopheles beklemishevi* Stegni and Kabanova sp.n." V.N. Beklemishev (1890-1962) was a distinguished malariologist in the former Soviet Union and a member of the WHO Expert Committee on malaria.

Anopheles claviger (Meigen, 1804)

Meigen, J.W. (1804) *Klassifikation und Beschreibung der Europäischen Zweiflügeligen Insekten (Diptera Linn.)*. 1. xxviii+152 pp. Braunschweig. Reichard.

Latin, clava = club; -ger, suffix = bearing, from gerere = to bear

Originally described as *Culex claviger*. On page 4 Meigen describes the club-shaped palps of the male in both Latin and German: "... palpis maris claviformibus ..." and "Freisspizzen des Männchens keulförmig".

Anopheles hyrcanus (Pallas, 1771)

Pallas, P.S. (1771) *Reise Durch Verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reichs*. 1. 504 pp. St Petersburg.

Pallas describes *Culex caspius* and *Culex hyrcanus* on page 475 saying "of the former "Versus mare Caspium in paludosis salsis, cum sequenti infestissimus" and of *Cx. hyrcanus* "Comes prioris, rarior sed Ferocior". He makes no other reference to the Caspian Sea but clearly has the ancient land of Hyrcania in mind in naming the species. Today this area corresponds with an area in northern Iran, bordering the southeastern shore of the Caspian Sea.

Anopheles messeae Falleroni, 1926

Falleroni, D. (1926) Fauna anofelica italiana e suo "habitat" (paludi, risaie, canali). Metodi di lotta contro la malaria. *Rivista di Malariologia* 5, 553-593.

Falleroni described *messeae* as a variety of *An. claviger*, the name misapplied to *An. maculipennis* s.l. by Italian workers at that time. Falleroni dedicated the species to Count Alessandro di Federico Messea, a notable Italian public health administrator who conducted campaigns against tuberculosis, cancer and malaria. In the same paper he also dedicated *An. claviger*, Mg., var. *labbranchiae* Falleroni to Antonio Labranca. On page 564 he states: "Le ho dedicate ad A. Messea, direttore Generale e A. Labranca, Capo Divisione della Sanità Pubblica, in omaggio alle loro benemerienze nella lotta contro la malaria nel nostro Paese".

Anopheles plumbeus Stephens, 1828

Stephens, J.F. (1828) Note on the foregoing paper, with a description of a new species of *Anopheles*. *Zoological Journal* 3, 502-504.

Latin, plumbeus = leaden, lead coloured

This species was described by Haliday (1828) but he did not name it. Haliday described it on page 501 as "3. A. __? A smaller species. Thorax lead colour, the sides with a blackish line ..." In the following article Stephens states "... The addition of a third species of *Anopheles*, proves incontestably how limited our knowledge of species remains..... the above may be called *An. plumbeus* ..."

Reference

Haliday, A.H. (1828) Notices of insects taken in the north of Ireland. *Zoological Journal* 3, 500-501.