

## BOOK REVIEW

MASON F.: THE AFROTROPICAL NEMOTELINAE (DIPTERA, STRATIOMYIDAE). Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali, Torino. Monografie XXIV. 1997, 309 pp. incl. 76 plates (3 of them in colour) and 19 distributional maps. ISSN 1121-7545, Hb: ISBN 88-86041-20-9. Price ITL 100,000.

Dr. Franco Mason, an enthusiastic and very promising Italian dipterist, is known among specialists by his first monograph devoted to the Afrotropical species of the genus *Microchrysa* (published by the Royal Central African Museum, Tervuren, Belgium, 1997). Now, he has focused his attention on the Afrotropical members of Nemotelinae. His concept of this subfamily is in full agreement with present opinions (see Stratiomyidae in the Contributions to a Manual of Palaearctic Diptera, Budapest, 1997), and thus represents a distinct progress in comparison with the system used by M. James in the Catalogue of the Diptera of the Afrotropical Region (1980), where *Nemotelus* is included in the subfamily Stratiomyinae and the related genera in Clitelliinae. Also, Mason's proposal to divide this subfamily into tribes Lasio-pini and Nemotelini seems to be quite sound and corresponds well with the present idea of the family's phylogeny. This extensive revision is written very carefully and respects all demands of the modern systematic study. The Afrotropical Nemotelinae include now 6 genera (not 5 as Mason pointed out in the Summary, where *Brachycara* is omitted in the first paragraph) embracing 39 species. One genus, two subgenera and 15 species are described as new. Under each species, the type material is described in detail and diagnosis, unified extensive descriptions of both sexes (if available) and notes

on variability, taxonomy, biology and distribution are given. Extensive data on the studied material prove that author examined more than 900 specimens including about 200 types from many institutions. The systematic part is accompanied by three very valuable tables summarizing the main metric characters – the body and wing length, the length, height and width of head, the width of frons and postocular area, the length of scape, pedicel and flagellum, as well as the head, facial and antennal indexes. Moreover, the most significant biometric characters of 20 species are compared by means of well-arranged graphs. Another separate chapter deals with the distribution of the Afrotropical Nemotelinae in the vegetational zones and also includes remarks on their biology, ecology and phenology. The extensive illustrations deserve a special comment. External diagnostic characters, as well as the structures of the male and female genitalia, are illustrated in virtually all cases for the first time. All figures are precise and easily comparable among the species treated. The general appearance of some species is demonstrated on three colour plates that should be particularly appreciated. The colour illustrations are very accurate from the entomological point of view and, at the same time, they confirm a high artistic standard resembling some of the masters of classical dipterological works (e.g. J.W. Meigen, cf. reproductions in Morge: Beiträge z. Entomologie, 1975–1976). In my opinion, the present monograph may serve as a good model of biosystematic revisions which will certainly inspire further dipterologists, both in general and specialists in this attractive family.

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