The names of European mosquitoes: Part 4

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This article is the fourth 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. 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. Where appropriate, a brief explanation of the etymology is provided. In some cases the explanation may not be 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.

Ochlerotatus Lynch-Arribálzaga, 1891

Greek, ochleros = troublesome; Greek, -tatos = superlative

This article by Lynch-Arribálzaga is in two parts. In the first section on page 374 Ochlerotatus (sic) is given in a key to genera and in the continuation of the work (page 143) the then genus is described and the name explained "...Ochlerotatus, nov.gen. Ab. ochleros molestus (superl. otatos)..." In the original, ochleros and otatos are in Greek script. The Latin equivalent of ochleros, i.e. molestus, is also given.

Aedes annulipes (Meigen, 1830)

Latin, annulus (a late Latin form of anulus, diminutive of anus) = ring; Latin, pes = foot

Meigen describes his species (as Culex annulipes) on page 241 making reference to the brown feet with white rings in both Latin and German: "... tarsis fuscis albo annulatis..." and "Fusse braun, mit weissen Ringen..."

Aedes atropalpus (Coquillett, 1902)

Latin, atro (ater) = black; palpus = palp, feeler

Under the heading "Culex atropalpus, new species" on page 292, Coquillett provides a full description of the female. Regarding the palps he says, "scales of palpi black", indicating the basis for his choice of epithet.

Aedes behningi Martini, 1926

Although there is no reference to the naming of the mosquito in the paper, it was clearly dedicated to Arvid Liberovich Behning (1890-1943) who was the Director of the Volga Biological Station in Saratov from 1912 until 1926. Martini collected his new species from Saratov, situated on the River Volga, and published the account of his discovery in the journal of the Volga Biological Station. Behning was an expert in Crustacea and on many other animal taxa from the River Volga. His name is also associated with the Ephemeroptera (mayflies); the genus Behningia Lestage, 1930 and the family Behningiidae Tshernova, 1938 bearing his name.

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Aedes berlandi Seguy, 1921

On page 194 of his article Seguy states clearly the part played by Monsieur Berland in the discovery of this new species, "La premiere a été capturée par M.L. BÉRLAND dans le laboratoire d'Entomologie du Muséum, 55, rue de Buffon, le 7-VII vers 15 heures (1921)...."

Aedes cantans (Meigen, 1818)
Latin, cantans = singing
Meigen's descriptions of this species (as Culex cantans), in Latin and German, contain no reference to the sound produced in flight, which influenced his naming of this species. In the title of this description Meigen once again ascribes the species to the collector "Hrn. Grafen v. Hoffmannegg" as follows: "Cul. cantans. Hoffnegg" (p 6).

Aedes caspius (Pallas, 1771)
Latin, caspius = of or belonging to the Caspian Sea.
On page 475, Pallas describes in Latin "CULEX caspius... Versus mare Caspium in paludosis salsis..." telling us precisely that his species occurred in salt marshes near the Caspian Sea.

Aedes cataphylla Dyar, 1916
Greek, kata = down, under; phyllon = leaf
Dyar describes the female and the egg on pages 86-87. He describes the type as "A captured female, Fallen Leaf, Lake Tahoe, California, June 11, 1916, taken biting in the woods at the south end of the lake." The species is presumably named after the location, Fallen Leaf, from which it was first described. The remote possibility exists that Dyar may have observed larvae of the species literally "under leaves" but the former explanation is preferred. A more correct translation of Fallen Leaf would have been pismenophylla, but cataphylla was chosen.

Aedes coluzzii Rioux, Guilvvard & Pasteur, 1998
Two apparently morphologically identical forms of Aedes detritus, designated sibling species A and B, were detected by isomorphic analysis of wild populations from the Camargue area of France (Pasteur et al., 1977). Evidence followed that the more northern European populations were species B and hence equate with the taxon described by Haliday (1833) from Holywood, Ireland (Rioux et al., 1998). Species A was named Aedes coluzzii by Rioux et al. (1998) in honour of Professor Mario Coluzzii, who pioneered work on the identification of sibling species of mosquitoes using electrophoretic techniques.
Aedes communis (De Geer, 1776)

Latin, communis = common

De Geer describes "Cousin commun" on page 316, cousin being a word for mosquito at that time. He continued to discuss his species saying, "... Les larves de Cousins les plus communes de celles que j'ai trouvees aux environs de Leufita dans le mois de Mai..." De Geer therefore makes clear the use of his name communis.

Aedes cyprius Ludlow, 1919

Latin, Cyprius = relating to Cyprus/ copper

The female of this new species is described on pages 158-160 and in his last sentence Ludlow remarks that "The insect as a whole is brilliantly copper colored and stands out conspicuously in a collection of other mosquitoes." Pliny records that copper (cuprum) was called after Cyprus (Kypros) and Ludlow used the epithet cyprius, meaning copper coloured, to describe the species.

Aedes detritus (Haliday, 1833)

Latin, detritus = rubbed away

Haliday includes "Culex detritus, N.S." in his locality list on page 148 and on page 151 he describes his species as follows: "Culex detritus. Nigro-fuscus, abdomen pallido-annulato, ventre trifariam fuscopunctato, femoribusque basi luteis. Size of C. pipiens. Palpi of male rather thick, as long as the proboscis. Wings thickly clothed with dusky black scales: disk of the thorax nearly naked". It is from this last observation that Haliday named his species.

Aedes dianthaeus Howard, Dyar & Knab, 1912 (1913)

Greek, di- = two; Latin, anta; plural -antae = square pilasters, columns, pillars

The first mention of the specific name is in Volume 2 (Plate 24, Figure 167) where the male genitalia are depicted. There are further descriptions in Volume 4 on pages 617 (in key to adults), 619 (in key to male genitalia) and 622 (in a list titled "Of the following species of Aedes we possess no larvae"). The actual description (of the male only) appears on page 758 of Volume 4. The palps of the male are described as "slightly exceeding the proboscis in length, blunt at apices; vestiture brownish-black; end of long joint and last two joints slightly enlarged, with dense, moderately long, black hairs". It is presumably the blunt nature of the palps that led to the adoption of the specific name.