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INSECTS OF THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS¹

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INTRODUCTION

When Charles Darwin visited the Galápagos Islands in September and October of 1835, he was impressed with the small size and dull colors of the insects he encountered, and of the insect fauna in general he commented that "excepting Tierra del Fuego, I never saw . . . so poor a country." G. R. Waterhouse, upon examining the insects which Darwin collected, reported that there was nothing in their appearance which would have led him to imagine that they had come from under the equator. Darwin described them as having a desert character, along with the plants and the birds.

Few entomologists who have visited the Archipelago would disagree with the generalization that the insect fauna is more desert than tropical in aspect, a fact in keeping with the arid nature of the islands, but tropical species are present, especially, but by no means exclusively, in the mangrove swamps along the shores and in the moist forests of middle elevations of the larger islands. The fauna is depauperate, as would be expected of oceanic islands populated by chance. For example, the continental British Isles have currently known more than three times as many families, ten times as many genera and thirty-two times as many species of insects as the Galápagos (table I). Although this differential will no doubt be reduced as the Galápagos fauna becomes better known, there is no reason to believe that it will ever be eliminated. However, although the fauna is poor in taxonomic entities, in favorable seasons it is rich in individuals, and the entomologists of the Galápagos International Expedition of 1964 brought back thousands of specimens.

In connection with our own studies we attempted to assemble as much as possible of the literature relevant to Galápagos insects prior to the Expedition, and to organize it in a systematic manner upon our return. The result gave us,

¹ Contribution No. 27 from the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galápagos Islands.

Family CANACEIDAE

Genus *Canace*

- maritima* Wirth, 1951, Occ. Pap. Bernice P. Bishop Mus., vol. 20, p. 263. Bartholomew
- snodgrassii* Coquillett, 1901, Proc. Washington Acad. Sci., vol. 3, p. 378. Fernandina, Isabela

Genus *Nocticanace*

- galapagensis* Curran, 1934, Proc. Calif. Acad. Sci., ser. 4, vol. 21, p. 160 (*Procanace*). Isabela, Santa Cruz, Wenman, Tower, Abingdon, Hood

Family CHLOROPIDAE

Genus *Hippelates*

- galapagensis* Curran, 1932, Nyt Mag. Naturvidensk., vol. 71, p. 356. Floreana
- pusio* Loew, 1872, Berliner Ent. Zeitschr., vol. 16, p. 279. Isabela

Genus *Cadrema*

- pallida* Loew, 1865, Berliner Ent. Zeitschr., vol. 9, p. 184 (*Hippelates*). Baltra

Genus *Oscinella*

- galapagensis* Curran, 1932, Nyt Mag. Naturvidensk., vol. 71, p. 357. Floreana

Family MILICHIIDAE

Genus *Desmometopa*

- m-nigrum* Zetterstedt, 1848, Diptera Scand., vol. 7, p. 2743 (*Agromyza*). Baltra

Family TETHINIDAE

Genus *Trixoscelis*

- costalis* Coquillett, 1901, Proc. Washington Acad. Sci., vol. 3, p. 378 (*Rhinoessa*). Isabela, Floreana, Española

Genus *Tethina*

- insulans* Curran, 1932, Nyt Mag. Naturvidensk., vol. 71, p. 359. Floreana

Family ODINIIDAE

Genus *Odinia*

- williamsi* Johnson, 1924, Zoologica, vol. 5, p. 90. Pinta, Rábida, Santa Cruz, Baltra, Santa Fé, Floreana