

Description of a new species of the Aedine
subgenus *Neomelaniconion* from Tongaland,
South Africa (Diptera: Culicidae)*

by

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As part of a programme for investigating arthropod-borne viruses in Southern Africa, a field station was established in 1956 at Ndumu, Tongaland, in northern Natal. The major activity at this station has been the hand collection of mosquitoes for attempts at virus isolation. By far the most abundantly collected species of mosquito in this region, on a yearly basis, is *Aedes* (*Neomelaniconion*) *circumluteolus* (Theobald). For example in 1959, of some 80,000 female mosquitoes identified, over 62,000 were of this species. On the other hand there were only 29 *A. (N.) lineatopennis* (Ludlow), while *A. (N.) luteolateralis* (Theobald), although recorded from Tongaland (1), has not appeared in Ndumu collections. These are the only three species of *Neomelaniconion* (formerly *Banksinella*) known from the Province of Natal.

Among the mosquitoes collected in 1959 were four specimens of a new species of *Neomelaniconion*. Two of these occurred in catches made in January while the other two were obtained in the following November. All are females. These may be known as

***Aedes* (*Neomelaniconion*) *aurovenatus* spec. nov.**

This is a small species, although small specimens of *A. circumluteolus* are of equal size. In Edwards' key (2) it comes closest to *A. luteolateralis*.

Head: Pale scales of vertex light yellow. Proboscis black. Tori brown. *Thorax*: Uniformly covered with narrow pale yellow scales, not forming stripes; integument black. A few sternopleural scales; mesepimeral scale patch lacking. *Abdomen*: Tergites with broad basal band of pale scales separated by an interruption from basal lateral spots of similar scales. Sternites mostly dark-scaled, but with a sparse scattering of pale scales. *Legs*:

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Dark. *Wings*: The pale yellow scaling of the wings is the most unique feature of this species, giving it its name. Distal third of costa pale-scaled; proximal two-thirds dark-scaled. Subcosta with scattered pale scales. Vein I pale-scaled almost to tip. Vein 2 with scattered pale scales on shaft, not fork. Vein 3 entirely pale-scaled. Vein 4 with scattered pale scales on shaft; upper branch of fork pale-scaled except at base; lower branch of fork entirely pale-scaled. Vein 5 pale-scaled throughout, including upper branch of fork. Vein 6 pale-scaled throughout. Fringe dark.

Edwards' key (p. 202, *loc. cit.*) may be amended as follows:

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|-----|--|-----------------------|
| 2. | First and fifth wing-veins yellow-scaled to near tip | 2a |
| — | These veins pale-scaled at most to middle of wing | 3 |
| 2a. | Third and sixth veins yellow-scaled | aurovenatus |
| — | These veins dark-scaled | luteolateralis |

The ♀ -holotype, January, 1959 and one ♀ -paratype, January, 1959 have been deposited in the collections of the South African Institute for Medical Research. The other two ♀ -paratypes, November, 1959 will be divided between the British Museum (Natural History) and the United States National Museum.

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REFERENCES

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2. EDWARDS, F. W., 1941. Mosquitoes of the Ethiopian region. III. Culicine adults and pupae. London, British Museum (Nat. Hist.) 499 pp.