

BOOK REVIEW

JONG DE H.: THE TYPES OF DIPTERA DESCRIBED BY J.C.H. DE MEIJERE, Backhuys Publishers, Leiden, 2000, 271 pp. ISBN 90-5782-062-5. Price USD 92.50.

This book is Volume 1 of a new series "Biodiversity Information Series from the Zoologisch Museum Amsterdam", edited by H. de Jong, C.S. Roselaar and R.W.M. van Soest, and a Guest-editor for volume 1 the experienced Oxford dipterist Adrian C. Pont. The guest-editor is an author of a very similar publication "The Type-Material of Diptera (Insecta) Described by G.H. Verrall and J.E. Collin" published by the Oxford University Press in 1995.

The present publication is part of a world-wide important program to catalogue the main zoological collections and, based on scientific studies, to produce an inventory of the type material in these collections. In this connection there are also the basic publications of Neal L. Evenhuis, the 1994 Catalogue of Fossil flies, and the 2 volume "Litteratura Taxonomica Dipterorum (1758-1930)" published in 1997 by the same Publishing House in Leiden as the present book, and previously reviewed in this journal.

Johannes Cornelis Hendrik de Meijere (1866-1947) was a famous Dutch entomologist, professor of applied zoology and genetics at the University of Amsterdam, a very active member and president of the Netherlands Entomological Society, and for a long time (until 1934) editor of the *Tijdschrift voor Entomologie*, where he also published most of his important entomological papers. He was also the founder of the Zoologisch Museum of the University of Amsterdam. In the References (pp. 257-271) there is a complete list of de Meijere's 256 papers published from 1890 to 1950. He published his first papers two years before he graduated in Botany and Zoology at the Municipal University of Amsterdam, and the last papers were published posthumously. The majority of de Meijere's publications are on Diptera, with some of the mainly earlier papers on his previous interests the hair of mammals (his University thesis), feathers of birds, Echinoidea and the morphology of the tarsi of Arthropods. It is remarkable that he was the sole author of 255 of his papers, and only one paper on the Chloropidae of Java was written in 1913 together with his friend, the famous German dipterist, Herman Becker. This supports de Jong's opinion that de Meijere tended to keep back topics he thought he would be able to work out himself, and not allowed others to participate in his work. He only had six doctoral students during his long University career. From 1899 to 1944 de Meijere

described, as stated in the Foreword, 65 new taxa at the generic level, and some 1200 species group names. Most of the types of these species names (1180) are deposited in the Zoologisch Museum in Amsterdam.

The de Meijere's Collection in Amsterdam consists mainly of types from the Oriental and Australasian regions that were collected by the well-known trader and naturalist E.R. Jacobson in the former Dutch East Indies (mostly Indonesia and Papua New Guinea). The descriptions appeared mainly in the 16-part "Studien über südostasiatische Dipteren" published between 1907 and 1924. The species described from the Netherlands were collected mainly by de Meijere.

After a short Introduction (pp. 1-5), which includes a portrayal of the rich private life of de Meijere, the main part of the publication consists of lists of genera arranged both alphabetically and systematically (pp. 9-14), followed by an alphabetical list of species (pp. 15-231), which includes the approximately 1200 species names proposed by de Meijere. Each name includes the original published combination with literature reference, the present status, citation of other relevant data, the location of the type specimens, and all subsequent references. As pointed out in the Introduction by the author, to locate and find the types (i.e. syntypes, as holotypes were not identified) was very difficult, because the type series were insufficiently labelled by de Meijere. This can be confirmed by the present author who in the 1980's and the beginning of 1990's visited the Amsterdam Zoologisch Museum on several occasions to study de Meijere's type specimens of Empididae. The type series were not separated from specimens added later to the collection and usually there was only one syntype labelled as type; now all type specimens have been correctly identified by the author of this book and labelled accordingly with red type labels. The author also visited Museums in Berlin, Budapest, Genova and Leiden, where additional type material is also located. After a very useful systematically arranged list of species names (pp. 232-245) there is a list of the localities with the present country location and full geographic coordinates of where the types were collected (pp. 248-256); this list will be of value for entomologists generally.

This is very important and much needed publication, which will serve as a pattern for museums and institutions housing important historical collections. Such fully documented lists are crucial for future taxonomic studies aimed at improving our knowledge of the faunistic richness and biodiversity.

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