



FIJI ARTHROPOD SURVEY TEAM SNIPPETS

No. 1 — Edited by Neal L. Evenhuis

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Welcome to FAST Snippets

This is the first newsletter devoted to the NSF-funded Fiji Arthropod Survey. By sending these newsletters out periodically via pdf file to all participants and making them available on the Fiji Arthropod Survey website, we hope that information will get out to the scientific and lay community in a timely fashion.

The newsletter will be devoted to any progress made during the NSF project. This will include items of interest such as new records, interesting finds, progress of the sorting team, upgrades to the MAFF collection facility, etc. In addition, we will provide brief updates on recent collecting trips to Fiji, give selected profiles of participating scientists as well as Fiji staff, and photographs of new and exciting discoveries made.

We welcome contributions by participants to be included here in future issues. Please send electronic files to the editor at: neale@bishopmuseum.org



MAFF Collection and sorting facility in Colo-i-Suva.

NSF Fiji Arthropod Survey project gets underway in January 2005 with First Training Trip to Fiji

The NSF-funded Fiji Terrestrial Arthropod Survey got underway in January 2005 with the first scheduled trip, focused primarily on training the sorters in Fiji. Participants included Neal Evenhuis (Dolichopodidae), Dan Bickel (Dolichopodidae), and Dan Polhemus (aquatic Heteroptera and Odonata). After arriving in Suva and settling in, everyone gathered at the MAFF Collection facility in Colo-i-Suva to begin the training course in teaching the Fijian sorting team how to identify and sort out the target taxa for the project.

Dan Bickel of the Australian Museum in Sydney, led the training course, which lasted 4 days. Sorters were trained in identifying the target taxa for the project (see box at right) and were taught quick techniques for not only identifying those groups, but also other groups that were being worked on by scientists not directly associated with the NSF grant. After only 2 days it was apparent that the sorters were quick learners and their accuracy in sorting some of the more difficult Diptera taxa was amazing. The third day was a field trip to Sigatoka dunes to learn various collecting techniques led by Dan Polhemus, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. The day included checking on one of the Malaise traps at the site, learning about yellow pan traps and aerial sweep nets; and a stop was made at a rocky beach to search for marine shore insects.

The last day of training included finishing the sorting of the samples given to them on the first day and the students and instructors were thanked that evening with a *lovo* at David Olson's house.

NSF FIJI ARTHROPOD SURVEY TEAM

Neal L. Evenhuis, PI
Daniel J. Bickel, co-PI
Michael E. Irwin, co-PI
David M. Olson, co-PI
Daniel A. Polhemus, co-PI

Scientists:

Charles Bellamy, Buprestidae
Andrew Bennett, Ichneumonidae
Dan Bickel, Dolichopodidae
Neal Evenhuis, Dolichopodidae, Asilidae, Tipuloidea
Steve Gaimari, Lauxaniidae
Rosie Gillespie, Spiders
David Grimaldi, Drosophilidae
Mike Irwin, Therevidae
Steve Lingafelter, Cerambycidae
Steve Marshall, Sphaeroceridae
Frank Parker, aculeates
James Pitts, aculeates
Dan Polhemus, aquatic Heteroptera, Odonata
Chris Reid, Chrysomelidae
Al Samuelson, Chrysomelidae
Eli Sarnat, Formicidae
Jeff Skevington, Pipunculidae
Chris Thompson, Syrphidae
Norm Woodley, Stratiomyidae

Fiji Sorting Staff:

Eli Sarnat, coordinator
Akinisi Caginitoba Tokota'a
Moala Tokota'a
Alipate Raikabula
Setariki Cokanasiga
Adi Lanieta Sokula

MAFF entomologist

Sanjana Lal

Scheduled Surveys

17–31 January 2005:

Dan Bickel, Neal Evenhuis, Dan Polhemus—Surveys of sites on Viti Levu (see this issue for details).

12–24 June 2005:

Andrew Bennett, Rosie Gillespie, Eli Sarnat—Surveys of Viti Levu, Taveuni, and Koro (see next issue for details)

August 2005 (TBD):

Dan Polhemus

November 2005 (TBD):

Charles Bellamy, Steve Lingafelter, Chris Reid, Al Samuelson

January 2006 (TBD):

Neal Evenhuis, Steve Gaimari, Jeff Skevington, Steve Marshall

February (TBD):

Mike Irwin, Chris Thompson [others?]

Highlights of January Survey

From 17–31 January 2005, Neal Evenhuis, Dan Bickel, and Dan Polhemus collected in numerous and varied habitats throughout Viti Levu.

The first trip was on 22 January to the west of Suva at sites near the Ocean Pacific Club Resort. Dan Bickel and Neal Evenhuis were let off on Naqara Island, a mangrove ecosystem, to collect marine dolichopodids along the rocky shoreline as well as in the mangroves. Successful collecting included a good series of specimens of the new species *Cymatopus baravikai* (described in the first issue of *Fiji Arthropods*). After being picked up, Bickel set up sticky traps in the nearby forest 1 km north of the Resort.

The next day was a trip to a logging road behind Mt. Korobaba led by Moala Tokota'a. Here odonates and dolichopodids were hand netted by Bickel, Evenhuis, and Polhemus.

From 29–30 January, a trip was made into the interior of Viti Levu to get to the high plateau searching for aquatic dolichopodids and odonates. Collections were made at various sites along tributaries to the Wailoa river on the 29th the way north to Tavua. The next day was the trip back and collecting was done at Wainidruku Creek, 2 km SE of Wailotua.

After Bickel and Evenhuis left on the 31st, Polhemus, Eli Sarnat, and Moala Tokota'a continued on a 4-day excursion to some of the same sites as well as new ones in the interior of Viti Levu.

Successful collections were made at many sites for odonates as well as aquatic dolichopodids.



Training class at beach near Sigatoka (left to right): Waisea Naisilisili, Moala Tokota'a, Sunil Raj Prasad, Eli Sarnat (coordinator), Hilda Waqa, Alipate Raikabula, Alvin Chandra, Julie Schreiber.



Unnamed waterfall on tributary of Wailoa River, Viti Levu, Fiji.

Recent Discoveries

New Diptera family records from Fiji:

Acroceridae

Mythicomyiidae

Dixidae

Resources

Fiji Arthropod Survey Website

<http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/fiji/>

Recent Publications:

Evenhuis, N.L. & Bickel, D.J. 2005. The NSF-Fiji Arthropod Survey: overview. *Fiji Arthropods I. Bishop Museum Occasional Paper 82*: 3–26.

Evenhuis, N.L. 2005. Preliminary checklist of Tipuloidea (Diptera) of Fiji, with new combinations. *Fiji Arthropods I. Bishop Museum Occasional Paper 82*: 27–30.

Evenhuis, N.L. 2005. New *Cymatopus* (Diptera: Dolichopodidae) from Fiji and related areas, with notes on described species. *Fiji Arthropods I. Bishop Museum Occasional Paper 82*: 31–46.

Bickel, D.J. 2005. The *Plagiozopelma flavipodex* species group (Diptera: Dolichopodidae: Sciapodinae) from Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands. *Fiji Arthropods I. Bishop Museum Occasional Paper 82*: 47–61.

Upcoming papers in the Fiji Arthropods series:

New species of *Mesoleptogaster* (Asilidae) from Fiji - Evenhuis

New *Mesochria* (Anisopodidae) from Fiji - Thompson

Checklist of ants (Formicidae) of Fiji — Wetterer and Ward

New *Cryptophleps* and a new genus (Dolichopodidae) — Bickel