

The identity and type host of *Strebla molossa* Giglioli

(Diptera : Streblidae)

The true identity of *Strebla molossa* as well as its type host has long been a puzzle to systematists. During the last 100 years, the species has, aside from catalogues, been mentioned only by Speiser (1900) who transferred it from *Strebla* to *Trichobius* and by Kishida (1932) who accepted that new combination for a composite species of Japan now known as *Brachytarsina amboinensis* Rndn. and *B. kanoi* Maa. The type left by Giglioli has, to my knowledge, never been critically studied by subsequent workers of this group of insects. It was loaned out from the original repository, the Genova Natural History Museum, some 15 years ago to the Entomological Institute of Torino University. In 1966, I made a special trip to Torino but failed to locate the type which is possibly lost. By now it appears safe to consider *Megaderma lyra sinensis* Andersen & Troughton as the type host and to establish the following synonymy.

Strebla molossa Giglioli, 1864, *Quart. J. Microsc. Soc., London* 4: 24, fig. 12. (Ex "Chinese *Molossus*", China: Fukien, Amoy).

=*Raymondia lobulata* Speiser, 1900, *Arch. Naturg.* 66 (1): 51 nom. nov. pro *kollari* Schin. 1868 (misidentification), non Frfld. 1855. (Ex "Fledermäusen", India: Mahamaleipur nr. Madras). **Syn. nov.**

Consequently, the species shall be known as *Raymondia molossa*, **comb. nov.** Evidences supporting this suggestion are:

(a) The wings of *molossa* was described as "ample, long and broad" and the head was drawn as about as broad as anterior part of thorax and slightly broader than long whereas the thorax, slightly longer than broad in ventral view. Such a combination of characters fits *Raymondia* only, but not any other Old World genera.

(b) *Lobulata* is the largest species (wing 1.8-2.5 mm) of the genus and is the only one fitting Giglioli's description for *molossa* ("wing about 1/10 of an inch", i. e., 2.54 mm).

(c) Both *Raymondia lobulata* and *Polcytenes molossus* Gigl. (Hemiptera: Polcytenidae) have been repeatedly found in India on *Megaderma lyra lyra* E. Geoffroy which is evidently the normal host of those 2 parasites. This is in coincidence with the finding in China (Giglioli, l. c.; Swinhoe, 1870) of *R. molossa* and *P. molossus*.

(d) No molossid is known as a normal host of *Raymondia* and *Polcytenes*. There was only 1 odd record of *R. seminuda* Jobl. (normally ex *Hipposideros*) ex *Tadarida faini* Hayman in the Congo (Jobling, 1954).

(e) Swinhoe (1870) remarked "*Dysopes (Molossus) rueppelii* [error for *rueppellii*] (large-eared tailed bat?). I procured a specimen of a bat some years ago at Amoy which greatly resembled Temminck's figure, though it could hardly be the same as that species which is from Egypt. My specimen was sent to England, and, I believe, is now in the collection of Mr. R. Tomes... The living animal carried two species of parasites, one winged and the other wingless. These have been described and figured by...". Apparently he was misled by Temminck's figure but did notice the large ears (which are characteristic for megadermatids but not molossids) in his specimen. The use of "tailed bat" was probably either because it is a common name for molossids, or he mistook the large tail-membrane in his specimen (no skeletal tail in megadermatids) as a true tail.

(f) Swinhoe's specimen of the so-called Chinese *Molossus* was collected in Amoy and was later sent to Tomes (see *e*, above). The data of the unique type of *Eucheira sinensis* [*Megaderma lyra sinensis*] are "Amoy, S. China, Tomes collection B. M. no. 7.1.1.339" (Andersen & Troughton 1907). In the ledger of the British Museum, the type was stated to have been collected by R. Swinhoe. It is, therefore, almost certain that the *Dysopes rueppellii* of Swinhoe (1870) served as the type of *sinensis*, and is not *Molossus chinensis* (nom. nud.) of Westwood (1874), not *Nyctinomus cestonii* [*Tadarida teniotis* Rafinesque] of Speiser (1900), nor *Tadarida teniotis insignis* Blyth (type locality: Amoy) of Ellerman & Morrison-Scott (1951).

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