

Defense of taxonomy, a Sisyphus task?

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Dear Editor,

Baum et al.¹ analyzed blood feeding sources (BFSs) of *Lutzomyia intermedia* in Adrianópolis, located in the north-east region of State of Paraná, by following the description reported by Young & Duncan². The redescription of *Lutzomyia intermedia* and the revalidation of *Lutzomyia neivai* in 1996³ were corroborated by other authors⁴. Almost all researchers working in the field of entomology have accepted this distinction between the species. After a doctoral thesis on this subject was presented by the present author to the Federal University of Paraná in 1997, another one was presented by José Dilermando Andrade Filho from the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in 2008.

However, why some researchers are adamant in the non-adoption of this differentiation is difficult to understand; whether this is attributable to the absence of bibliographical research or the disregard of taxonomic precision is not clear. The former pretext is unreasonable, because of the presence of careful bibliographical research and good interpretation of data on the studied insects. The disregard for the differentiation of species that can be easily differentiated, such as *Nyssomyia intermedia* and *Nyssomyia neivai*, introduces unnecessary imprecision on the identification of the studied species, devaluing the study and jeopardizing its reference in future studies, an important consequence of the *impact* of publications. Although one *Ny. intermedia* had previously been found in Adrianópolis, besides the 4,649 *Ny. neivai* reported previously⁵, this municipality is situated in the Ribeira river Valley where both species have been found in the neighboring region of the State of São Paulo⁶⁻⁹. Therefore, the sandflies analyzed were probably all *Ny. neivai*, but this cannot be conclusively confirmed. The importance of differentiation is emphasized by the finding of significant differences between the blood-feeding patterns⁸ and seasonal and hourly activity⁹ of *Ny. intermedia* and *Ny. neivai* in the Ribeira Valley at São Paulo. The reference to the observations on the flight range of *Ny. neivai*¹⁰ by Baum et al.¹ reinforces the disregard on the differentiation of both the species.

The utilization of *Nyssomyia* as a genus is highly recommendable, unless a disproof is published and generally accepted¹¹; however, the correct specific identification of the studied insects is mandatory to prevent the devaluation of published reports.

The usefulness of correct taxonomy has been defended¹², but this defense seems to be a *Sisyphus task*, due to the continued

disregard of some researchers and poor judgment of some journals while accepting manuscripts.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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