



## An overview of the Afrotropical Ommatiinae (Diptera: Asilidae) with a key to genera

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## Abstract

The nine genera of the Afrotropical Ommatiinae are briefly reviewed and include a revised key to genera. A new genus and a species group are diagnosed and described. **New genus:** *Longibeccus* (type species, *O. fuscovittatus* Ricardo, 1900). **New combinations:** Transferred to *Longibeccus* from *Ommatius*, 1821: *O. fuscovittatus* Ricardo, 1900, and *O. imperator* Oldroyd, 1939. **New status:** subgenus *Metommatius* Hull, 1962, is elevated to generic level. **New species group:** *neotenellus* includes *Ommatius coperitus* n. sp., *O. latus* n. sp., *O. neotenellus* Bromley, *O. polixus* n. sp., and *O. ultimus* n. sp. from east Africa. The male of *O. neotenellus* is described for the first time. Only one species of *Michotamia* (*M. coarctata* Macquart, 1855), is confirmed from Madagascar. **New synonymies:** *Afroesticus minutus* (Bromley 1936)=*Ommatius flavipes* Loew, 1860; *Michotamia cothurnata* (Bigot, 1875)=*Cophinopoda pulchripes* (Bigot, 1859). Illustrations of heads, antennae, wings, and terminalia of selected species and keys to the species of *Longibeccus* and the *neotenellus* group are provided. Distributions of the Afrotropical genera are briefly discussed.

**Key words:** Diptera, Asilidae, Ommatiinae, *Longibeccus*, *Metommatius*, *neotenellus*

## Introduction

*Ommatius* Wiedemann, 1821, the largest and most diverse genus, has been the focal point of this ongoing revision. Though many areas of Africa remain poorly sampled, especially arid and semiarid areas, numerous interesting and undescribed taxa have been discovered recently. Study of them, in combination with older material, has greatly improved our understanding of the Ommatiinae. To date, studies have addressed various taxonomic questions and advanced our knowledge of the taxa significantly since Oldroyd's (1980) catalogue listing of 4 genera and 84 species. Of these, *Cophinopoda* Hull, 1958, and *Thallosia* Oldroyd, 1960, have been reviewed (Tsacas & Artigas 1994). *Emphysomera* Schiner, 1866, earlier listed as a synonym *Ommatius*, was reinstated (Scarborough & Marascia 1996). Two genera, *Afroesticus* Scarborough, 2005 and *Pygommatius* Scarborough & Marascia, 2003 were described with several species being transferred to them from *Ommatius*. Lastly numerous earlier species of *Ommatius* have been verified and new ones added (Scarborough 2002, Scarborough *et al.* 2003). Together with one new genus, elevating the subgenus *Metommatius* Hull, 1962, to generic status, and adding four new species in this paper, the numbers are increased to 9 genera and 133 species (Scarborough 2007, Londt pers. comm.).

This paper is an overview to the Afrotropical Ommatiinae genera and includes a revised version of an earlier key (see Scarborough 2005). A new genus, *Longibeccus*, is described to accommodate 2 previously named species, *Ommatius fuscovittatus* Ricardo, 1900, and *O. imperator* Oldroyd, 1936. The subgenus *Metommatius* Hull, 1962, is elevated to genus, and the *Ommatius neotenellus* species group is proposed to accommodate five species, four of which are new, including a key to the species. The status of *Afroesticus minutus* (Bromley, 1936), *Ommatius flavipes* Loew, 1860, and *Michotamia cothurnata* (Bigot 1875) is clarified. Distributions of the 9 Afrotropical genera are briefly discussed.

## Material and methods

The descriptive format and procedures follow those of previous papers (Scarborough 2005; Scarborough & Hill 2000, Scarborough & Marascia 2003). Descriptions are based on all material examined. Terminology follows McAlpine (1981). Measurements were made using an ocular micrometer in the eyepiece of a Meiji dissecting microscope. Quantitative characters used in the descriptions are defined as follows: **Body length** = distance in lateral view from the anterior margin of the face to the apex of the terminalia; **Wing length** = straight-line distance in dorsal view from the articulated base to the apex; **Face-Head:Width Ratio (FHWR)** = maximum straight-line in anterior view / distance across the face at the base of the antennae; **Cell  $m_1$  Width Ratio ( $m_1$ WR)** = diameter of cell at the basal 1/3 [widest point] and apical 1/3 [constriction] / diameter of the cell base; **Metathoracic Femoral Width:Length Ratio (MFWLR)** = straight-line distance from the apex to the trochanter dorsally / greatest diameter. Ratios [averages] are based on character measurements of 10 specimens or if less than all specimens in the series.