



## A case of two spellings for Humboldt's blue-winged mosquito (Diptera: Culicidae)

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While adding taxon names to the *Systema Dipteriorum* database (Evenhuis & Pape 2021), one of us (NLE) discovered that Humboldt (1819) had spelled the proposed name of a nominal mosquito species in two ways. He described the species, which was found in swampy places along the Magdalena River near Tenerife, Colombia, as *Culex cyanopennis* on page 340 and afterwards referred to it as *Culex cyanopterus* on pages 345 and 349. Both names have the same meaning: *cyano-* (Gr. *kyanos*, dark blue), *pennis* (L. *penna*, feather, wing) and *pteron* (Gr. feather, wing). The species was named for the perceived color of the wings: “Alæ cæruleæ, splendore semi-metallico...” (wings blue, a bright semi-metallic). On page 345, Humboldt states, translated from the French: “We have been informed in the Rio de la Magdalena that in Simiti no other *Culex* than the *jejen* [*je-jén*: Sp., gnat, mosquito] was known in the past. You can spend the night there quietly, because the *jejen* is not a nocturnal insect. Since the year 1801, the big blue-winged mosquito (*Culex cyanopterus*) has shown itself in such abundance that the poor inhabitants of Simiti do not know how to get a peaceful sleep.” Thus, in addition to having the same meaning, the two names are associated with the same locality.

*Culex cyanopennis* has been considered to be a junior synonym of *Psorophora (Psorophora) ciliata* (Fabricius, 1794) ever since it was synonymized with that species by Dyar (1928). It subsequently has been listed as a synonym of *Ps. ciliata* in the catalogs of Edwards (1932), Stone *et al.* (1959), Knight & Stone (1977), Harbach (2018) and Wilkerson *et al.* (2021). On the other hand, the name *Culex cyanopterus* does not appear in any mosquito catalog, including the first catalog composed by Theobald (1905). Additionally, Sherborn's *Index Animalium* omitted all the new names found in Humboldt's 1819 treatise and instead cited them from their subsequent appearance in a free translation of the mosquito narrative Froriep's *Notizen* (Anonymous 1822) (but omitting the alternate spelling *cyanopterus*, which occurred in that translation as well). In accordance with Article 24.2.3 of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature 1999), one of the two original spellings of the name must be selected as the correct spelling for the nominal species. For consistency and correlation with the list of new species described by Humboldt (1819), we hereby act as First Reviser and select *Culex cyanopennis* as the correct spelling of the name of this nominal species.

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