
THE IDENTITY OF **NIRMUS BRACTEATUS** NITZSCH
(MALLOPHAGA: INSECTA)

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*Nirmus bracteatus* Nitzsch, 1866 (Philopteridae) taken from *Dacelo gigantea* = *D. gigas* was listed under *Nirmus* in Hopkins and Clay, 1952 as its generic identity was unknown. Recently Mr. R. H. Stranger has collected some Mallophaga from two specimens of *Dacelo gigas* at two localities near Perth, W. Australia; these have been compared with the sketches of a male and female *Nirmus bracteatus* in the Nitzsch manuscript and there is little doubt that they are this species. One of the reasons it was difficult to place *bracteatus* in the Check List was the possibility that it might be a straggler from another host, being unlike any species known from the Alcedinidae. However, in addition to the original record and the specimens collected by Mr. Stranger, there are two separate records from the type host amongst the material in the British Museum (N.H.) collections: one female from Queensland and two males and two females from New South Wales collected in 1933 by N.J.B. Plomley. There seems little doubt therefore that *bracteatus* is established on *Dacelo gigas*.

It remains to discuss the affinities of this species and to find a suitable generic position for it. In the following characters it resembles some species of *Brueelia*; in general habitus some of the stouter species; the head carinae are similar, although the ventral carinae at the points of attachment of the pulvinus are not typical (Clay, 1951: 188); the thorax and tergal aspects of the abdomen are similar to some of the Corvidae-infesting species; the female genital region is typical of *Brueelia*, having small spiniform setae on the vulva and a group of setae each side arising from a tubercle-like part of the last segment; the male ano-genital opening is dorsal. The male genitalia resemble the most usual type found in the *Degeeriiella*-complex, especially in the absence of a head to the paramere articulating with the basal apodeme, a condition also found in *Penenirmus*. However, there is variation in the type of male genitalia found in the *Degeeriiella*-complex, some of which have articulating heads to the parameres (see Clay, 1958). This species also resembles members of the *Degeeriiella*-complex in having long ocular setae and 2 + 2 long temporal marginal setae, not 1 + 1 as in *Brueelia*.

Tendeiro erected the new genus *Emersoniella* for *halcyonis* parasitic on *Halcyon hombronii* from Masawan, Philippine Islands. *N. bracteatus*
Fig. 1.—*Brucelia bracteata* (Nitzsch).

Fig. 2.—*Brucelia bracteata* (Nitzsch). ♀

—Photographs by J. V. Brown, Photographic Studio, British Museum (N.H.)

resembles this species in the characters of the head and female terminalia and the number and lengths of the ocular and temporal setae: the male genitalia of *E. halcyonis* are of the form characteristic of *Degeeriella* from the Falconiformes. The main difference between the two species is the presence of pleurites with well developed re-entrant heads in *halcyonis*. However, there is little doubt that they are congeneric and that Nitzsch’s species can be referred to as *Emersoniella bracteata*.

REFERENCES

