

PTILIIDAE (COLEOPTERA) FROM THE AZORES ¹

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INTRODUCTION

From the end of February until the middle of April 1957, Professors Per Brinck and Erik Dahl led the Lund University Expedition to the Azores and Madeira. During the course of this expedition, some material of Ptiliidae was collected in the former group of islands, and these specimens were made available to the writer for study through the courtesy of Prof. Brinck, to whom my thanks are due. Of the three species represented in the collected material, two have not been previously recorded from the Azores.

LIST OF THE SPECIES COLLECTED BY THE SWEDISH EXPEDITION

(1) *Ptenidium pusillum* (Gyllenhal) (= *apicale* Erichson)

Localities — *São Miguel*: Ribeira da Praia, 3 km. W of Vila Franca do Campo, (Loc. 27) 13.3.57, «on *Oxalis*», 2 specimens; Ponta Delgada, 13.3.57, «Berlese sample, among decaying leaves», 1 specimen; Ribeira das Três Voltas, near Ribeira Chã, (Loc. 35), 16.3.57, «river», 1 specimen.

Previous Records — *Faial*: «in a shed among feathers etc., with several other insects of the same imported class» (Crotch 1867:371). — *São Miguel*: «Ponta Delgada, abundant dans des amas de feuilles mortes, dans un parc» (Méquignon 1942:27).

Wider Distribution — Europe, North Africa, Persia and North America.

1) Report No. 60 from the Lund University Expedition in 1957 to the Azores and Madeira.

2) Department of Entomology, Manchester Museum, The University, Manchester 13, England.

(2) *Acrotrichis fascicularis* (Herbst)

Localities — *São Miguel*: Ponta Delgada, 2 km. NE of town, 3.3.57, «swimming pool», 1 specimen (δ); 3 km. W of Porto Formoso, (Loc. 20), 9.3.57, «near the road on a slope», «in detritus», 2 specimens (δ ♀); Relva, tanque da Rocha Quebrada, (Loc. 31), 15.3.57, «swept at the lake», 1 specimen (♀); 1 km. N of Povoação, Ribeira dos Lagos, (Loc. 60), 24.3.57, 1 specimen (δ).

Wider Distribution — Europe and North Africa.

(3) *Actinopteryx fucicola* (Allibert)

Localities — *Faial*: Baía da Areia das Fontes, 1 km. N of Praia do Norte, (Loc. 77), 2.4.57, «on shore, under stone, grassy ground», 9 specimens.

Wider Distribution — sea coasts of Europe (northwards to southern Sweden), North Africa (extending down the Red Sea), Asia Minor and eastern North America.

OTHER SPECIES PREVIOUSLY RECORDED FROM THE AZORES

Acrotrichis matthewsi (Wollaston)

Localities — *São Miguel*: «Ponta Delgada, avec le précédent (ie. *Ptenidium pusillum*), et aussi abondant; Furnas, 7 ind.» (Méquignon 1942: 27).

Remarks — This is a little-known species, only reliably recorded as yet from the Canary Islands and the Caucasus — from the latter as *soror* Flach (see Sundt, 1963: 28). It is difficult to believe that such a species could have been precisely identified by Méquignon from the inadequate references to it in the literature at the time of his work, particularly since it would be necessary to examine the spermatheca in order to effect an accurate determination. In these circumstances it is not unreasonable to consider Méquignon's record as being erroneous, even though it has not proved possible to re-examine his material. The specimens will probably prove to be *fascicularis*.

OBSERVATIONS

There are no endemic species of Ptiliidae known from the Azores, although there are a few endemics in Madeira and the Canary Islands. The three species collected by the Swedish expedition have a wide dis-

tribution in Europe and North Africa, the *Ptenidium* and *Actinopteryx* in addition occurring in North America. Apart from the *Actinopteryx*, the other two recorded species are often found associated with man and were very likely inadvertently introduced by him in the past: they particularly frequent decaying animal and vegetable debris, especially old hay, but occur in many other situations. *Actinopteryx* however is quite different. The members of this genus are strictly maritime and are to be found in seaweed and other rejectamenta along the sea-shore, as well as at the roots of plants. From preliminary studies by the writer, there would appear to be few species, these having a scattered although wide distribution about the oceans of the world. Under these circumstances, it is possible that their distribution could be enhanced through transport on floating rejectamenta or by the sea voyages of man.

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