The occurrence of *Culex pseudovishnui* in Iran

The *Culex vishnui* group includes species of mosquitoes that are actual and potential transmitters of arboviruses, including Japanese encephalitis (Trooper *et al*., 1980). The taxonomy of the group was reassessed by Colless (1957), who found that *C. vishnui* had been misidentified by most authors since Theobald's (1901) first description. Colless (1957) gave the new name *C. pseudovishnui* to the widespread species most frequently misidentified as *C. vishnui* and redescribed the species included in the group. Later, Reuben (1969) and Sirivanakarn (1975, 1976) gave additional taxonomic observations on the *C. vishnui* group and made further descriptions of the included species. It is clear from these works that the larvae can be distinguished more easily than the adults.

While preparing keys and diagnoses for the Culicidae of Iran (Zaim, in preparation), earlier records of larvae and adults of *C. vishnui* from Iran (Lotfi, 1973) were checked and compared with descriptions and specimens in the British Museum (Natural History), London. Larvae determined by Lotfi, from ricefields in Hik, Zahedan, all unrecared, were identical with descriptions and illustrations of *C. pseudovishnui* by Colless (1957), Sirivanakarn (1975, 1976) and Tanaka *et al*. (1979) and with specimens in the British Museum (Natural History). It is of interest that thoracic seta 4-P, which is very variable in *C. pseudovishnui*, is consistently long and double branched in the Iranian specimens. During examination of the Iranian specimens it became clear that the *C. vishnui* larva keyed by Gutsevich *et al*. (1971, trans., 1974) is actually *C. pseudovishnui*, and this error may have given rise to Lotfi's misidentification.

One male and two females from Hik, Zahedan, identified as *C. vishnui* by Lotfi (1973) have been re-examined and found to be identical to the descriptions and illustrations of *C. pseudovishnui* by Sirivanakarn (1975, 1976).

*Culex pseudovishnui* is known from Pakistan (Trooper *et al*., 1980) and is widespread in the Oriental region eastwards to Irian Jaya (Sirivanakarn, 1976) and palaeartic Japan (Tanaka *et al*., 1979). The westward extension of the known range into Iran, here reported, may have medical significance in view of White's (1982) records of *C. pseudovishnui* as a natural vector of both Japanese encephalitis and West Nile virus.

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