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AQUATIC INSECTS OF UPPER THREE RUNS CREEK,
SAVANNAH RIVER PLANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
PART II: DIPTERA¹

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and Ray S. Harvey⁵

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ABSTRACT

The Diptera fauna of Upper Three Runs Creek and its tributaries on the Savannah River Plant near Aiken, South Carolina, is documented to support ecological investigations by the Savannah River Laboratory. Diptera and other aquatic insects were collected biweekly from September 1976 through August 1977 with light traps and semiquantitative benthic sampling techniques. At least 230 species (13 families) of aquatic flies were identified from 5,948 specimens. At least 52 species and two genera of chironomids appear to be new to science. Several other species are rarely collected or are here reported from South Carolina for the first time. Collectors (gatherers and filterers) accounted for 62% of the total insect fauna, scrapers 15%, predators 12%, and shredders (herbivores and detritivores) 11%. Most of the insects were associated with "snag" habitats.

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Key Words: Ceratopogonidae, Chironomidae, Athericidae, Culicidae, Tabanidae, Simuliidae, Tipulidae, Trichoceridae, functional groups, snag habitats

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in detail in Part I of this series (Morse *et al.* 1980), aquatic insects were collected biweekly from six locations on Upper Three Runs Creek, Savannah River Plant near Aiken, South Carolina, from September 1976 through August 1977, using light traps and semi-quantitative benthic sampling methods. See Part I (Morse *et al.* 1980) for site and habitat descriptions and for a discussion of the methods used. In that publication, faunistic results were provided for all insect taxa except Diptera and relative abundance data for all but Diptera and non-dryopoid Coleoptera.

At least 551 species of aquatic insects (including the 230 dipterous species reported here) were identified from 34,206 specimens examined in the study. Based on an average, for all benthic samples, of ranked numerical abundance and ranked frequency of collection for each species, a revised list of the 25 most commonly collected species is provided in Table 1.

The periods of adult flight activity as indicated by light trap collections, the different life-history stages captured, and overall abundance ranking are indicated in Tables II-VI for each dipterous taxon identified from the drainage system. These findings are summarized below by the five cooperating taxonomic specialists.

CERATOPOGONIDAE

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At least 41 species or presumed species of biting midges were distinguished among 547 larvae and 17 adults (Table II). This entire assemblage of species is most intriguing in its overall diversity and in the unique distribution of species among tribes and sub-families.

This is easily the largest complement of Nearctic aquatic Ceratopogonidae reported from a single small stream system, especially considering that most specimens were larvae. Reasons for the unusually diverse list include: (a) the specialized collection procedures (including benthic, debris, littoral, and vegetation samples) used in this study were more likely to yield ceratopogonids than standard procedures would be; (b) heretofore, aquatic biologists have been unable to identify their ceratopogonid specimens properly with available literature (but see below); and (c) Upper Three Runs Creek is indeed diverse with respect to ceratopogonids, in comparison with the relevant fauna which

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Table 1. The 25 Most Commonly Collected Benthic Insects

Rank ¹	Taxon	Number of specimens/ Number of times collected ²	Habit(s) ³	Trophic relationship(s) ³
1.0	<i>Polypedium</i> sp. (Diptera)	983/93	Climbers, clingers	Herbivores, gatherers, predators
2.0	<i>Cheumatopsyche</i> spp. (Trichoptera)	665/88	Clingers	Filterers
3.5	<i>Tribelos</i> sp. (Diptera)	457/56	Clingers	Gatherers, scrapers
3.5	<i>Macronychus glabretus</i> Say (Coleoptera)	315/65	Clingers	Gatherers?, scrapers
5.0	<i>Lepidostoma</i> spp. (Trichoptera)	293/61	Climbers, sprawlers, clingers	Detritivores
6.0	<i>Gonielmis dietrichi</i> (Muggrave) (Coleoptera)	336/55	Clingers, clingers	Gatherers?, scrapers?
7.0	<i>Baetis</i> sp. (Ephemeroptera)	313/58	Swimmers, clingers, clingers	Gatherers, scrapers
8.5	<i>Phylocentropus</i> spp. (Trichoptera)	454/49	Burrowers	Filterers
8.5	<i>Simulium dixiense</i> Stone & Snoddy (Diptera)	598/45	Clingers	Filterers
10.0	<i>Rheotanytarsus</i> sp. (Diptera)	261/55	Clingers	Filterers
11.0	<i>Hydropsyche elissoma</i> Ross (Trichoptera)	327/41	Clingers	Filterers
12.0	<i>Stenonema</i> sp. nr. <i>smithae</i> Traver (Ephemeroptera)	153/59	Clingers	Gatherers, scrapers
13.0	<i>Brachycentrus nigrosoma</i> (Banks) (Trichoptera)	223/44	Clingers	Filterers, scrapers
14.0	<i>Perlesta placida</i> (Hagen) (Plecoptera)	187/52	Clingers	Predators
15.0	<i>Stenelmis markeli</i> Motschulsky (Coleoptera)	259/40	Clingers	Scrapers, gatherers
16.0	<i>Gomphus</i> (<i>Gomphus</i>) sp. (Odonata)	136/49	Burrowers	Predators
17.0	<i>Conchapelopia</i> sp. (Diptera)	147/45	Sprawlers	Predators
18.0	<i>Cricotopus</i> sp. (Diptera)	156/39	Clingers, miners, tube builders	Herbivores, gatherers
19.0	<i>Hexagenia</i> sp. (Ephemeroptera)	223/31	Burrowers	Gatherers
20.0	<i>Caenis</i> sp. (Ephemeroptera)	182/33	Sprawlers	Gatherers
21.0	<i>Paraphaenocladus</i> sp. (Diptera)	96/43	Sprawlers?	Gatherers
22.0	<i>Procladius</i> sp. (Diptera)	191/27	Sprawlers	Predators, gatherers
23.0	<i>Ancyronyx variegata</i> (Germar) (Coleoptera)	84/42	Clingers, sprawlers	Gatherers?, scrapers?
24.0	<i>Trialenodes</i> spp. (Trichoptera)	96/36	Swimmers, clingers	Herbivores
25.0	<i>Stenelmis</i> spp. (Coleoptera)	89/37	Clingers	Scrapers, gatherers

¹Based on an average, for all benthic samples, of ranked numerical abundance and ranked frequency of collection for all species.

²Out of a total of 125 benthic samples.

³Herritt and Cummins, 1978.

the author has examined from other comprehensive collections made in lotic waters of AK, AL, CO, ND, NY, PA, SC, VA, WV, and Ontario. Interestingly, two small spring-fed sandhill streams in North Dakota yielded about 30 species (to my knowledge, a previous high for a small stream), but with a markedly different species distribution among genera (Knausenberger, unpubl. data).

The tribe Sphaeromiini, which usually is greatly under-represented in typical benthos collections, here constitutes a surprising 37.5% of the species and

cant *Culicoides* populations to develop. All the Forcipomyiinae recorded here are at most semi-aquatic: *Atrichopogon levis* lives on damp soil with algae or moss in shaded depressions subject to flooding, and *Forcipomyia* spp. typically live under the bark of dead trees.

Finally the prominent use of qualifiers, such as "prob." and "poss." (but not ":" — see Knutson *et al.* 1980), in the species list is apparent, as is also that over one-half of the species are identified by numbers. These factors can be attributed to (a) the underdeveloped status of larval systematics in Ceratopogonidae, and reflects reasoned prudence in identification of specimens from unassociated larval material for which many species and even genera are not known, or for which existing gaps make definite species assignments inadvisable at present; and (b) the fact that many specimens were not in the last instar, for which characters are most fully developed. Of course, this is a fairly characteristic situation for larval Diptera in general and midges in particular. Undoubtedly, at least a few of these specimens represent species entirely new to science, while for a majority of the larvae, descriptions have not been published yet. However, this state of affairs is improving (Glukhova 1977, 1979; Grogan and Wirth 1979; Knausenberger in diss., Wirth and Grogan 1979). Continued progress depends upon refined collection procedures and association of larvae with their respective adults by rearing.

CHIRONOMIDAE

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A total of at least 146 species of Chironomidae were identified among 4,359 larvae, pupae, and adults examined (Table III). Identifications were based on adult taxonomy except where immatures were distinctive enough not to be confused with adults of the same or similar species. Many of the identifications are tentative because the material was limited, or published information defining generic or species limits was inadequate. This inadequacy was particularly evident for at least 52 undescribed species and two new genera. All these forms will ultimately be described by various authorities and some differences may be interpreted as representing specific variation. Description of the new *Larsia* species, the species of Tanytarsini and *Pseudorthocladius*, and the two new genera are being prepared by the specialists indicated in Table III.

The total number of species collected is close to the 143 collected by Coffman (1973) in Linesville Creek, an 8-9 km long woodland stream in western Pennsylvania. His list was based on pupal collections and probably represents only aquatic forms. Because the Upper Three Runs Creek identifications were based largely on adults, they contain semiterrestrial forms, terrestrial forms, and possibly adults from other bodies of water. This sam-

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SIMULIIDAE

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Five species of black flies were identified from 796 specimens of larvae and pupae (Table V). *Simulium dixiense* was by far the most abundant, comprising more than 76% of specimens collected. Although *Ectemnia invenusta* was recorded previously from South Carolina, as *Cnephia invenusta*, by Noblet *et al.* (1978) from Chesterfield, Kershaw, Marion, and Richmond counties, this apparently is the first record for Aiken County. It is interesting to note that this species is primarily northern in distribution being recorded from Ontario, Quebec, Minnesota, Maine, and New York. I have seen no distribution records of this species in the area between New York and South Carolina. Both Davies *et al.* (1962) and Stone (1964) report that the immature stages are found in deep, swift flowing streams, sometimes up to four feet in depth which could explain why it is lacking in collections from states between New York and South Carolina.

The other species *S. jenningsi*, *S. tuberosum*, and *S. jonesi* are commonly collected in the Southeast.

Table V. Simuliidae.

	Form(s) ¹	Rank ²	Adults taken in Light Traps													
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		
<i>Ectemnia invenusta</i> (Walker)	L	81.0														
<i>Simulium dixiense</i> Stone & Snoddy	P, L	3.5														
<i>Simulium jenningsi</i> Malloch	L	258.5														
<i>Simulium jonesi</i> Stone & Snoddy	P, L	51.0														
<i>Simulium</i> sp.	L	33.0														
<i>Simulium tuberosum</i> (Lundstroem)	L	145.5														
<i>Simulium venustum/verricundum/tuberosum</i> grp.	P	211.0														

¹A = adult, L = larva, P = pupa

²Based on an average, for all benthic samples, of ranked numerical abundance and ranked frequency of collection for each species.

TIPULIDAE AND TRICHO CERIDAE

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At least 21 aquatic species of Tipulidae were identified from 100 adults and larvae (Table VI). Most of the crane flies collected during this survey belong to species that have broad ranges in eastern North America. Many, in fact, have been recorded from southeastern Canada southward to Florida and westward to the Mississippi River valley or the central plains. For some of these, however, records from South Carolina are not common and are more likely to be from the mountainous northwestern part of the State. An example (but not an aquatic species) is *Dolichopeza americana* Needham, the previously known range of which extended from central Georgia northeastward to Labrador and northwestward to South Dakota, Alberta, and Alaska, with records for only Greenville and Pickens counties in South Carolina.

Table VI. Tipulidae

Form(s) ¹	Rank ²	Adults taken in Light Traps												
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<i>Antocha opalizans</i> Osten Sacken	A													
<i>Brachypremna dispellens</i> (Walker)	A													
<i>Gonomyia</i> (<i>Lipophleps</i>) <i>puer</i> Alexander	A													
<i>Gonomyia</i> (<i>Lipophleps</i>) <i>sulphurella</i> Osten Sacken	A													
<i>Hexatoma</i> (<i>Eriocera</i>) <i>cinerea</i> (Alexander)	A													
<i>Hexatoma</i> (<i>Eriocera</i>) <i>rossi cinerea</i> (Alexander)	L													
<i>Hexatoma</i> sp.	L													
<i>Limnophila</i> (<i>Dicranophraga</i>) <i>fuscovaria</i> Osten Sacken	A													
<i>Limnophila</i> (<i>Eutonia</i>) <i>marchandi</i> Alexander	A													
<i>Limnophila</i> (<i>Phylidorea</i>) <i>similis</i> Alexander	A													
<i>Limnophila</i> sp. nr. <i>frosti</i> Alexander	A													
<i>Limonia</i> (<i>Geranomyia</i>) <i>communis</i> (Osten Sacken)	A													
<i>Limonia</i> (<i>Geranomyia</i>) <i>rostrata</i> (Say)	A													
<i>Ormosia nigripila</i> (Osten Sacken)	A													
<i>Pedicia</i> (<i>Tricyphona</i>) <i>inconstans</i> (Osten Sacken)	A													
<i>Pedicia recondita</i> (Osten Sacken)	A													
<i>Pseudolimnophila luteipennis</i> (Osten Sacken)	A													
<i>Tipula</i> (<i>Nippotipula</i>) <i>abdominalis</i> (Say)	A, L													
<i>Tipula</i> (<i>Tanatotipula</i>) <i>eluta</i> Loew	A													
<i>Tipula</i> (<i>Tanatotipula</i>) <i>furca</i> Walker	A													
<i>Tipula</i> (<i>Tanatotipula</i>) sp.	A													
<i>Tipula</i> (<i>Tanatotipula</i>) <i>tricolor</i> Fabricius	A													
<i>Tosorhina</i> (<i>T.</i>) <i>magna</i> Osten Sacken	A													

¹ A = adult, L = larva, P = pupa

² Based on an average, for all benthic samples, of ranked numerical abundance and ranked frequency of collection for each species

Tipulid species whose ranges have been extended by this survey, or which are otherwise notable, include the following:

Antocha (*Antocha*) *opalizans* Osten Sacken — primarily a boreal species, known previously from Quebec and Maine westward to Wisconsin and southwestward to northern Georgia, mainly along the Appalachian Mountains because in the larval form the species inhabits riffles in clear, cool streams.

Pedicia (*Tricyphona*) *inconstans* (Osten Sacken) — widespread in eastern North America, from Newfoundland and westward to Minnesota and southwestward to Missouri and Georgia, but to my knowledge not previously recorded from South Carolina. Common in wet margins of small streams and in swamps.

Limnophila (*Euphylidorea*) *similis* Alexander — specimens from the survey area represent a taxonomically confusing group of flies (the *similis* species group) in which species have been recognized largely on the basis of relatively minor color differences. The typical *similis* is recorded from New York, New England, and adjacent Ontario; *consimilis* Dietz occurs in that area but also westward to Michigan and southwestward along the Appalachians to Tennessee and North Carolina. Seven other nominal species occur within this range, one of them, *subsimilis* Alexander, in eastern Tennessee. The sample from the Upper Three Runs area includes both what I regard as typical *similis* and specimens that could be identified as *consimilis*. The group are species of mesic woodlands bordering small streams and swamps.

Limnophila (*Euphylidorea*) sp. near *frosti* Alexander and *lutea* Doane — represented by two small males with body length only about 4 mm; with elongate, slender, outwardly bowed and sharply tipped gonapophyses; wings strongly tinged with yellowish brown and exhibiting, in several cells, paler zones paralleling main longitudinal veins, as described for *L. frosti*, but lacking a distinct stigmal spot. *Limnophila frosti* is known from the female only, from central Florida.

Limnophila (*Eutonia*) *marchandi* Alexander — has been recorded from New England westward to Michigan and southwestward to northern Florida,

but it is an uncommon species and I am not aware of any previous collections of it from South Carolina. It is typical of swampy woods, thus is not particularly a montane species and may not occur in the northwestern part of the State.

The following five species, though not aquatic, were taken in the light traps and represent new records for South Carolina:

Tipulidae - crane flies

Tipula (Schummelia) annulicornis Say — generally a northeastern species, recorded earlier from New England westward to Michigan, Indiana, and southwestward to eastern Tennessee. Its larvae probably occur in damp, organic soil.

Tipula (Triplictipula) perlongipes Johnson — described from Florida but probably widespread in southeastern United States; recorded heretofore from Florida, North Carolina, Indiana, and Kansas. The larvae are almost surely terrestrial, in woodland soil.

Trichoceridae - winter crane flies

Trichocera bimacula Walker — common and widespread, recorded earlier from Nova Scotia westward to Wisconsin and Kansas, southward to North Carolina. Its larvae occur in decomposing matter such as a leaf litter.

Trichocera brevicornis Alexander — recorded heretofore only from Georgia. Terrestrial, probably in leaf litter, as larvae.

Trichocera fattigana Alexander — known previously from Georgia, Tennessee, and Illinois. Larvae terrestrial, in damp, decomposing leaf litter.

DISCUSSION

Even with the addition of the Diptera to the list of most common taxa in Upper Three Runs Creek, the dominance of species requiring stable solid substrates is high; climbers, clingers, and sprawlers (Merritt and Cummins 1978) constitute 89% of the total specimens in Table I. Of these most common species, only *Phylocentropus* spp., *Gomphus (Gomphus)* sp., and *Hexagenia* sp. are burrowers in the homogeneous, sandy stream bottom. These findings invite ecological research into the significance of insect communities of vascular hydrophytes (especially *Vallisneria*) and other so-called "snag" habitats in flowing waters.

Another surprising result of these investigations (Fig. 1) is the predominance of collectors (gathers and filterers; 62%) and the small proportion of shredders (herbivores and detritivores; 11%) among the major taxa from Table I. In these computations, the total number of specimens for each taxon was distributed evenly among the various trophic relationships cited for it by Merritt and Cummins (1978). Comparing the insect trophic structure for Upper Three Runs Creek with Cummins' model (*e.g.*, 1977) further demonstrates the remarkable divergence of this community from other stream communities investigated, again suggesting an important role for snag habitats in sandy bottomed streams.

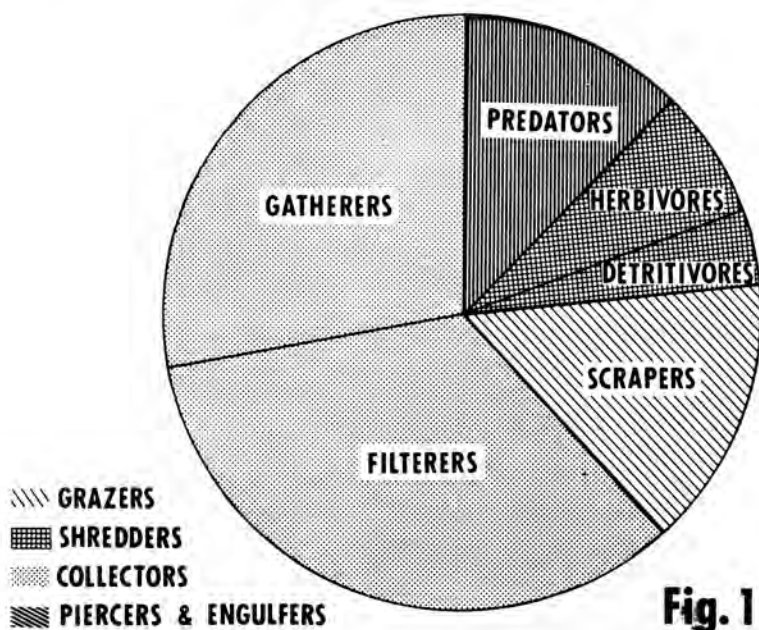


Fig. 1. — Proportions of trophic relationships of the 25 most common benthic insect taxa in Upper Three Runs Creek and its tributaries (from Table I); collectors-filterers = 34%, collectors-gatherers = 28%, scrapers = 15%, predators = 12%, shredders-herbivores = 7%, shredders-detritivores = 4%.

The overall diversity reported for this stream (at least 551 insect species) and the numerous range extensions and previously undescribed taxa (at least 62 new species and two new genera) mentioned above and in Part I of this series (Morse *et al.* 1980) may be attributed to at least four factors: (1) the use of semi-qualitative, rather than exclusively quantitative, benthic sampling techniques, (2) the use of light traps for capturing more thoroughly identifiable adults, (3) the relatively high intensity of sampling (biweekly for a full year), and (4) the cooperation of so many first-rate taxonomic specialists, including 14 section authors and the various colleagues whose assistance they solicited. The checklist, in particular, is longer than any we know for comparable streams in North America.

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