

with some degree of certitude that, like the latter, they prey essentially on Lamellicorn beetle grubs. The rather anomalous "blue ant," *Diamma bicolor*, is somewhat related to the *Methoca* group, and being a fierce and active insect of good size perhaps attacks caraboid beetle larvæ.

AN AFRICAN FIGITIDÆ.

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Aspicera africana sp. nov.

Male and Female. Body entirely black, except the antennæ and legs, which are rufous-brown. *Head:* black, ocelli yellowish, compound eyes silvery; front concave, coriaceous, with a few, short, wavy lines, bounded laterally by prominent ridges extending from the lateral ocelli to the base of the antennæ and beyond half way to the mouth; lower half of face irregularly rugosostriate, hairy; cheeks hairy; mandibles dark rufous; antennæ rufous-brown, darker toward the tips, in the ♀ 13-jointed, in the ♂ 14-jointed. *Thorax:* entirely black, finely coriaceous, the sides of the pronotum and the metapleuræ dense with white hairs; mesopleuræ with a large shining area; parapsidal grooves continuous, deep, cross-ridged, broad at the scutellum, curved sharply apart at the pronotum; a narrow, elevated median ridge extending from the pronotum half way to the scutellum; the depressed median groove from that point to the scutellum is two-thirds as wide as the distance between parapsidals; anterior parallel lines smooth, elevated, extending half the length of the thorax; foveæ very large, very deep, sparsely striate, with a fine, shallow ridge between; the spine of the scutellum about half the length of the whole scutellum, with 3 to 5 longitudinal ridges. *Abdomen:* piceous black, finely and regularly punctate, the 2nd segment dorsally about one-third the total length and reduced to a mere scale on the sides, 3rd segment reaching almost to the tip of the abdomen; abdomen in the male similar but more slender. *Legs:* uniformly rufous-brown, including the coxæ; with short hairs. *Wings:* very clear, without hairs; the subcosta, basal vein, and radius distinct, pale

yellowish, the other veins hardly discernible; apical branch of the subcosta lacking; radial area open also at the distal end. *Length*: 3.0–3.5 mm.

Range. *South Africa*: Salisbury, 5050 ft. (F. L. Snow coll.).

Types. 1 female and 1 male cotype in the collection of the Kansas State Museum; and 1 male cotype in the author's collection.

One of the male specimens is marked as collected in June, 1900; the other male and the female in Dec. 1900. In *Das Tierreich*, in Dalla Torre and Kieffer's key the species would run down to *A. coriacea* from which it is distinct in having all parts of the thorax black and the legs uniformly rufous-brown. The genus has not heretofore been known from Africa south of the north coast.

ON THE VARIATION OF *TABANUS ATRATUS* FABRICIUS.

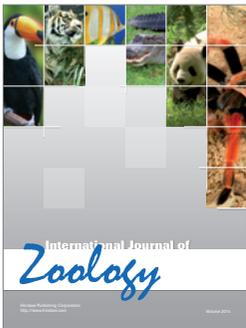
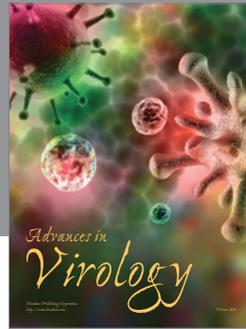
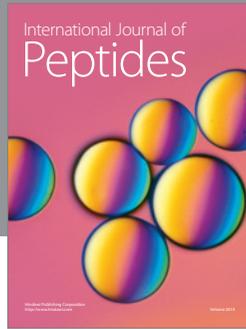
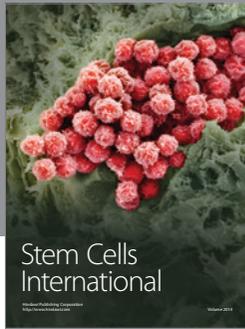
BY CHARLES W. JOHNSON,
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This species, in its distribution along the Atlantic coast from Maine to Florida, is subject to considerable variation, which fact was referred to by Osten Sacken in his *Prodrome* (*Memoirs Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, vol. II). On page 455 he says: "Northern specimens, for instance those found around Boston, often have the wings pale brown, even yellowish brown toward the posterior margin." Professor Hine in describing this form as *T. nantuckensis* from Nantucket, seems to have overlooked this reference, for he says: "There is reason to believe that this insect has become isolated on the Island for it has not been taken elsewhere so far as I can find."

Tabanus atratus var. *nantuckensis* Hine

Tabanus nantuckensis Hine, *Ohio Jour. Sci.*, p. 271, 1917.

At most this is only a variety of *T. atratus*, apparently confined to the New England coast. Its "smaller size" does not count, for I have typical *T. atratus* as small as *nantuckensis* (20 mm.). This leaves for consideration only the color of the wings—dark brown with the posterior half or more, yellowish brown, as a distinguishing character, which in a large series from along the coast merges into



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