

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.

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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 Prodrôme (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