

THE THREE *RANATRAS* OF THE NORTH-EASTERN UNITED STATES.

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Several entomologists have discussed with me the question of the distinguishing characters of *Ranatra quadridentata*, Stal, and *Ranatra fusca*, Pal. Beauv., and in consequence I venture to set forth here briefly and plainly the differences between these two and *Ranatra Kirkaldyi*, n. sp., which I took for the first time in New York State.

A few preliminary remarks on this genus may perhaps be found interesting. The genus *Ranatra* was established in 1790 (sec. Kirkaldy) by Fabricius without a type being fixed, and under it he described *R. filiformis* and *R. elongata*, both from Tranquebar. In it naturally fell Linné's *Nepa linearis*, which Latreille in 1802 made the type of the genus. The described American species, exclusive of synonyms, are the following:

*Ranatra Fabricii*, Guérin, from Cuba.

*Ranatra rabida*, F. B. White, from Brazil.

*Ranatra unidentata*, Stal, from Rio Janeiro.

*Ranatra quadridentata* Stal, from Mexico.

*Ranatra fusca*, Pal. Beauv., from the United States.

*Ranatra annulipes*, Stal, from Brazil.

To these six it is my privilege to add a seventh:

*Ranatra Kirkaldyi*, n. sp., from the type localities, Putnam Co., N. Y., and Chicago, Ills.

*Ranatra fusca*, Pal. Beauv., and *R. quadridentata*, Stal, appear to have been much confused with each other, due to the very brief description of the former given by its author, and perhaps also to the fact that small specimens of the latter are hardly distinguishable from the former on a superficial examination. Palisot de Beauvois, after his extremely brief Latin description, makes a comparison between *R. fusca* and the European *R. linearis*, and, of course, in the absence of the latter for comparison, it is hardly possible to fix on the former with any degree of certainty. His description simply reads: "Greenish-fuscous, setæ shorter than the body, wings reddish-fuscous." The last is quite a noticeable character of the insect. There are to be found more than a few *R. quadridentata* in which the air-tubes are noticeably shorter than the body, but the wings in this species are hyaline, "very slightly infuscated," as