

THE CYRTID GENERA THYLLIS AND MEGALYBUS.

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The genus *Thyllis* was established by Dr. Erichson in a monograph of the Cyrtidæ published in 1840. Four species were described in this paper, all from Capeland, South Africa. In the year 1865 Dr. Philippi described six species of Cyrtidæ from Chile, for which he erected the genus *Megalybus*. In 1868 Schiner gave notes on two Chilean species in his "Reise der Novara," recognizing in these two forms two of the species described by Philippi a few years before. In this paper Schiner placed *Megalybus* as a synonym of *Thyllis*. In a note he stated that there was no doubt in his mind that the genera were the same, at least no character was given that would justify separation. In the two species before him he noted that the eyes met above and below the antennæ and he continues, "whether this is the case with all *Megalybus* species I cannot say, were it so, those *Megalybus* species in which the eyes do not come together under the antennæ would be in another genus, that would then differ from *Philopota* in the wing venation, from *Thyllis* by the eyes not joining under the antennæ."

In 1876 Westwood described four species from Chile, stating "the names here employed for this genus and its four species were found attached to the specimens in Mss. when purchased, and have been retained, although, I believe, they have never been published." Evidently Westwood had not seen Philippi's above mentioned paper, for all four species were synonyms of those described by Philippi and had perhaps been named from his collection. Neither did Westwood compare the genus *Megalybus* with *Thyllis*, to which it is so nearly related. In his generic description he states that the eyes are contiguous above and below the antennæ.

It would appear then that Schiner was correct in his synonym, but unfortunately all of the Chilean species of this group do not have the eyes touching beneath the insertion of the antennæ. My attention was called to this point when examining specimens of what I take to be *Megalybus gracilis* Phil. in the U. S. National Museum. There are three specimens collected in Chile by Mr. E. C. Reed. All have the eyes distinctly separated below the antennæ. Mr. J. R. Malloch informs me that all of his Chilean species of the genus *Megalybus* have the eyes separated below the antennæ. Verrall, in his "British Diptera," considers *Megalybus* as a distinct genus. It may be that one sex has the eyes contiguous below the antennæ and the other has not; if so, it is something occurring nowhere else in the family. It is my opinion that the genera should be considered as distinct, although they are very closely allied, as can be seen from the figures. The species of *Thyllis* which I have figured has two median dorsal ridges on the mesothorax, which are not present in the Chilean species of *Megalybus*.

There are five genera in the Cyrtidæ belonging to the remarkable group Philopotinae, if we consider *Megalybus* as a genus, the others being *Thyllis*, *Philopota*, *Terphis* and *Helle*. They are distinguished from all other Diptera by the remarkable development of the prothoracic humeral lobes, which meet in front of the thorax in these forms. Most of the species have a grotesque, hump-backed appearance.

Some of the literature on the two genera under discussion is rather inaccessible and I give a translation of the descriptions below.

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