

## SYNOPSIS OF THE DIPTEROUS GENUS PHORA.

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In Osten Sacken's well-known Catalogue of Diptera ten species of *Phora* are credited to our fauna. Of these I have been unable to find any Phorid described by Fabricius under the name of *atra*. The author who first used this name appears to have been Meigen; in his *Klass. Besch. Eur. Zwei. Insect* (1804), this author describes a *Trineura atra*, but in his later work (*Syst. Besch. Eur. Zwei. Insect*, 1830) this name is relegated as a synonym of *Musca aterrima*, Fabr. (*Ent. Syst.*, 1798). In the recent revision of the Austrian Phoridae, by Strobl (*Wiener Ent. Zeitung*, 1892, pp. 193-204), no mention is made of a *Phora atra*, Fabr. The reference in the Catalogue should therefore be credited to Meigen, and transferred as a synonym of *Trineura aterrima*, Fabr.

*Phora fuscipes*, Macq., has been credited to our fauna by Walker, but from Macquart's three-line description it is quite impossible to identify the species, and the name should therefore disappear from our list. The form doubtfully referred to this species by Zetterstedt does not occur in our fauna so far as I am aware.

Since the publication of the above mentioned Catalogue, descriptions of five supposed new species of *Phora* from our fauna have been published, viz.: *aletiae*, Comstock (*Cotton Insects*, 1879, pp. 208-211), and four other species by Prof. Aldrich, in the *CANADIAN ENTOMOLOGIST*, Vol. xxiv., pages 142-146. Although I have not seen an undoubted type of *Phora aletiae*, Comst., still there is every reason for believing that it is identical with the common *Phora nigriceps*, Loew. The described female was evidently immature, which would account for the darker markings on the abdomen mentioned in the description; in the male, however, it is stated that the "dorsal portion of the abdomen is entirely blackish," and this accords perfectly with the colouring of this part of the body in normally coloured specimens of *nigriceps*. Moreover, this latter species has been repeatedly reared from larvæ feeding upon the decomposing chrysalides of *Aletia*, thus having similar habits to the form described by Prof. Comstock.

So far as at present known, the larvæ of all the different species of *Phora* feed upon animal or vegetable substances in a more or less state of decay. In Prof. Aldrich's paper mentioned above the statement is made that several of the species were reared from *Cimex* cocoons, but in a recent letter the author states his conviction that these cocoons contained only dead larvæ and pupæ at the time they were attacked by the Phorids.