

Mosquitoes Biting Frogs

There are no records from the Australian region of mosquitoes biting amphibians, nor of mosquitoes of the genus *Uranotaenia* being observed taking a blood meal, though Bancroft (1908) found specimens of *U. pygmaea* Theobald gorged with avian blood and O'Gower (1960) reported reaction of engorged *U. albescens* Taylor to precipitin tests for blood of horse and fowl and of *U. nivipes* (Theobald) to tests for blood of ox and fowl. Remington (1945) showed that *U. lowii* Theobald, an American species, feeds on amphibians (including *Hyla*) but in general little is known of the habits of members of this genus, which has almost a world-wide distribution.

At the Mitchell River Mission, North Queensland, I collected the following mosquitoes biting a large green frog (identified as *Hyla caerulea* (Shaw) by Dr. M. J. Mackerras):

- 1 April 1960; 9.45 p.m.: *Uranotaenia albescens* Taylor 1 female.
- 3 April 1960; 10.45 p.m.: *Culex* (*Lophoceraomyia*) sp. 1 female.
- 8 April 1960; 10.50 p.m.: *Culex* (*Lophoceraomyia*) sp. 1 female.

This frog frequented the verandah of a building about 50 yards from a permanent creek, and remained quiet when a torch was shone on it and the mosquitoes collected with an aspirator. Adults of *U. albescens* and of *C. (Lophoceraomyia)* spp. were exceedingly numerous in daytime resting places amongst dense water hyacinth in the creek. *C. (Lophoceraomyia)* females were also taken biting man and horse. Males of three species of this subgenus were collected among hyacinth, but females cannot at present be specifically identified.

H. caerulea is known to harbor a haemogregarine parasite in its blood, and the possibility of these or other mosquitoes acting as the invertebrate host of this parasite is worth investigation.

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References

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