

8th March 1976

The Editors
Mosquito Systematics
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Dear Sirs:

Firstly I would like to congratulate Dr. G. B. White on his excellent paper on the nomenclature of some African Culicidae (Mosquito Systematics, 1975, 7:303-344), and secondly I would like to add a few comments.

I do not think one can be dogmatic as whether species A, B or C of the *Anopheles gambiae* complex was before Giles when he described *A. gambiae* from the Gambia, before Patton when he described *A. arabiensis* from Aden and before Theobald when he described *A. quadriannulatus* from the Transvaal. As yet relatively few determinations have been made on the *gambiae* complex from these areas, so even if all specimens of the complex recently collected from any of these areas have been identified as belonging to a single species, the possibility of the presence of the others cannot be excluded. Furthermore, the present abundance and geographical distribution of the species of the complex does not necessarily reflect their past distribution. There are of course several records of temporal changes in the abundance and distribution of mosquitoes. Therefore while I agree that the most appropriate names are probably *A. gambiae* for species A, *A. arabiensis* for species B and *A. quadriannulatus* for species C, I fail to see how it can, at present, be resolved as to what really constituted the type specimens.

I think Dr. White has clearly shown that *Culex pipiens quinquefasciatus* has priority over the name *C. p. fatigans*. But it must remain pure speculation as to whether or not the two "original" specimens of Say received by Wiedemann were some of his syntypes. Because of this, I would favour the suggestion made by White as one of the possible solutions to the problem, that a request be made to the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature to set aside Wiedemann's type specimens of *ferruginosus* for priority over the name *quinquefasciatus*.

Yours faithfully,

M. W. Service