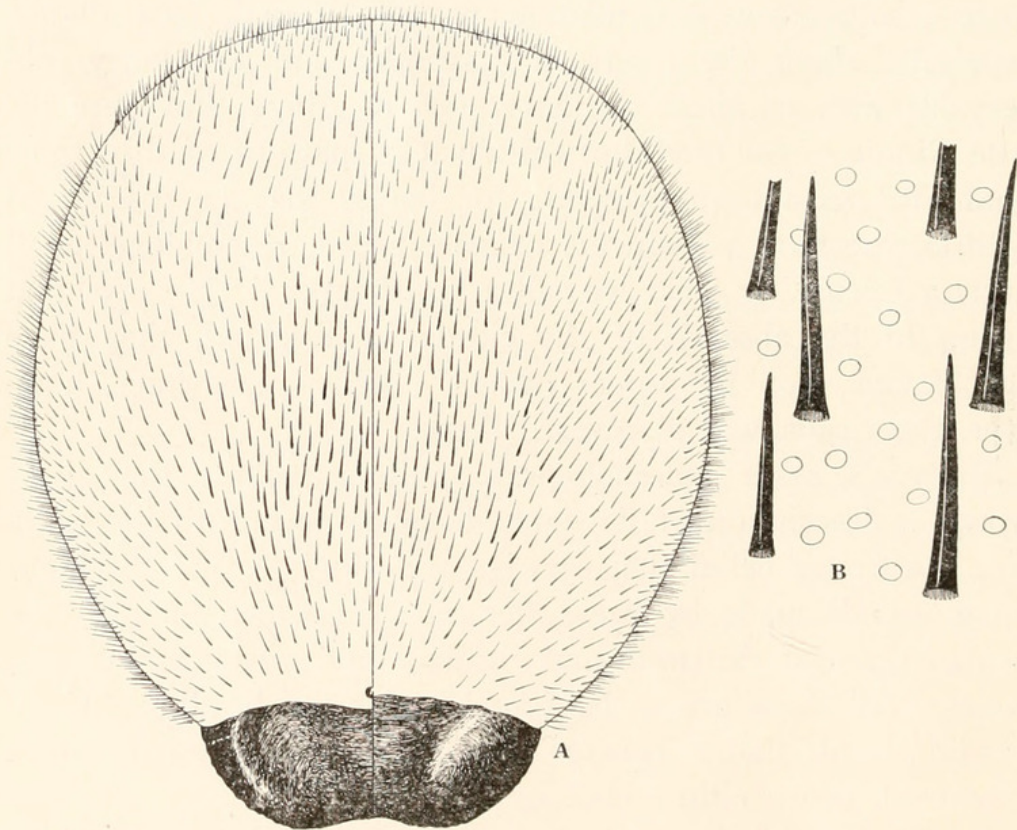


**The Larva of *Olfersia vulturis* Van der Wulp.
(Diptera: Hippoboscidae).**

By G. F. FERRIS, Stanford University, California.

In September, 1925, the writer obtained at San Blas, Nayarit, Mexico, from a single specimen of the black vulture, *Catharista urubu*, sixteen specimens of a Hippoboscid fly. At least as many more individuals of the fly escaped, so that the total Hippoboscid population of this one bird was at least somewhere between thirty and forty. The species is that described by Van der Wulp as *Olfersia vulturis*. Elsewhere I have joined in an expression of the opinion that *vulturis* is a synonym of *Olfersia spinifera* (Leach), but I am not now so certain that this is the case. I shall not enter into a discussion of the question here and for the present at least I am reverting to the use of the name *vulturis*.



Olfersia vulturis Van der Wulp: A, larva; B, portion of derm of larva.

From these flies there were obtained three newly deposited larvae. Two of these were found in the insect net in which the flies were caught and one was attached—perhaps acci-

dentally—to the feathers of the host. As far as I am aware no larva of any species of this genus has yet been described. These at hand present certain very striking peculiarities that distinguish them from any other Hippoboscid larvae that have so far been described or with which I am familiar.

In its general form the larva of this species is the same as that which is characteristic of the family, its length on the slide about 5 mm. The stigmatic plate is similar to that of such forms as *Ornithoetona nigricans*, *O. strigilecula*, *Ornithomyia lagopodis* and *Hippobosca maculata*. The posterior end of the body is capped by a single plate, representing probably a fusion of the usual paired spiracles, this plate being pierced by a number of small, pore-like openings which communicate with tracheal trunks. It has been impossible to determine the arrangement of these pores, for the stigmatic plate is so heavily chitinized and deeply pigmented that it is quite opaque in uncleared specimens and attempts to clear it in caustic potash resulted merely in its complete disintegration.

The peculiar feature of the species is the fact that the entire body, excepting only the stigmatic plate and a narrow transverse zone which extends entirely about the body near the cephalic end, is thickly beset with short spines (Fig. B). These are spines, not setae, there being no socket. They vary somewhat in size, being noticeably larger near the center of the body on both dorsal and ventral sides. In addition to these the derm is everywhere marked by small, sub-circular, clear areas. The transverse zone which is free from spines marks the line along which the puparium splits at the time of emergence of the adult.

In all the other species that have been described and that I have seen, the derm of the larva is entirely free from spines or irregularities of any sort.

At the University of California, E. O. Essig, associate professor of entomology and associate entomologist, has been appointed professor of entomology and entomologist at the experiment station. Dr. Edwin C. Van Dyke, associate professor of entomology, has been appointed professor of entomology.—*Science*, Dec. 30, 1927.



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