



A new species of *Microvelia* (Insecta: Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Gerromorpha) from coastal Espírito Santo State, with a key to the species of the genus recorded from southeastern Brazil

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Abstract

Microvelia nessimiani **sp. nov.** from coastal Espírito Santo State, Brazil, is described, illustrated, and compared with similar species. An identification key to the species of *Microvelia* so far recorded from southeastern Brazil is presented.

Key words: Aquatic insects, Hemiptera, Neotropical Region, taxonomy

Resumo

Microvelia nessimiani **sp. nov.** coletada no litoral do Estado do Espírito Santo, Brasil, é descrita, ilustrada, e comparada com espécies similares. Uma chave de identificação para as espécies de *Microvelia* registradas até o momento no sudeste do Brasil é apresentada.

Palavras chave: Hemiptera, insetos aquáticos, Região Neotropical, taxonomia

Introduction

The family Veliidae comprises a very diversified and well-distributed group of semiaquatic bugs (Schuh & Slater 1995), whose representatives are usually found on the surface film of freshwater bodies. Species of some genera, such as *Husseyella* Herring, 1955, are associated with estuaries and mangroves (Herring 1955; Moreira *et al.* 2010), but they never occur on open ocean water, which is the case of the genus *Halobates* Eschscholtz, 1822 of the family Gerridae (Cheng 2006). Veliids can also be found on foam retained by rocks or fallen logs on streams and rivers, like the genus *Oiovelia* Drake & Maldonado-Capriles, 1952 (Spangler 1986), or on water-filled tree holes and water pockets of bromeliads, as in the genera *Microvelia* Westwood, 1834 and *Paravelia* Breddin, 1898 (J.T. Polhemus & D.A. Polhemus 1991; J.T. Polhemus & D.A. Polhemus 1999).

Among the subfamilies of Veliidae, Microveliinae is one of the more neglected in terms of important taxonomic revisions and phylogenetic studies, and several tribes, genera, and subgenera are not monophyletic (Damgaard 2008). Because of these facts, the identification and taxonomic study of the group is very difficult, especially in the case of the Neotropical species of *Microvelia*, most of which have old and incomplete descriptions that often lack drawings.

Many species of the subfamily remain to be described (J.T. Polhemus & D.A. Polhemus 2008) and Espírito Santo State (Fig. 1) is known to be an under-collected area for aquatic and semi-aquatic Heteroptera, called a “black hole” by J.T. Polhemus & D.A. Polhemus (2007). Aware of these facts, the authors of the present study have recently made several collections throughout the state, resulting in the description of seven new species of Veliidae and many new records and distributional expansions (Moreira *et al.* 2010).