

CULICOIDES /CERATOPOGONIDAE/ ATTACKING MAN IN THE
RECREATION SITES OF GDAŃSK

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Gdańsk is a large city situated in the north-east of Poland on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea. Biting midges of the genus Culicoides which occur in the city are relatively well studied. They were investigated in saline coastal habitats in Gdańsk-Górki Wschodnie /Skierska, 1973; Szadziwski, 1983/, in the zoological garden in Gdańsk-Oliwa /Szadziwski, 1982 b/, and in some living and suburban quarters /Szadziwski, 1985/. Despite the fact that many species of Culicoides have been occasionally found to be aggressive to the man in Gdańsk /Skierska, 1973; Szadziwski, 1985/ their annoyance to the man has not been satisfactorily studied in the city. It is worth noting that there are various recreation sites where biting midges may annoy the resting people during spring and summer time.

In summer 1985 and from May to September 1986 one-hour catches on a single human bait were made in five recreation sites of Gdańsk. They are the following study points: Oliwa - forestal meadow at Abrahama street, Dolina Radości - forestal meadow, Jelitkowo - at public gardens, Jasień - at Jasień lake, and Osowa - at Wysockie lake. In all catches the collector sat on the ground with outstretched legs, and the midges were caught with an aspirator from naked legs mainly. Catches were not performed in windy or rainy weather. Each catch started 40 minutes before sunset.

From 51 catches in 1985 and 55 catches in 1986 727 females of Culicoides have been collected. In 1985 - 15 and in 1986 - 29 catches were positive. The maximum number of biting midges caught on the bait in one hour was only 74 in Oliwa and 50 in Dolina Radości. Both catch sites were located on forestal meadows. From May 16th 1986 to September 18th 1986 an average number of 8.3 females per one catch, and 15.7 females per one positive catch were attracted to the bait. Then their aggressiveness to the man was not important when comparing to the rural localities of North Poland, where 223 females of the genus were caught during 10 minutes on a single human bait /Szadziwski, 1982 a/.

The following 14 species of Culicoides have been collected during the present study: C. obsoletus - Oliwa, Doli-

na Radości, Jelitkowo, Jasień, Osowa, 303 females; C. pallidicornis - catch sites as above, 287 females; C. chiopterus - Oliwa, Dolina Radości, Jasień, Osowa, 47 females; C. punctatus - Oliwa, Dolina Radości, 31 females; C. impunctatus - Oliwa, Dolina Radości, 31 females; C. kibunensis - Oliwa, Dolina Radości, 11 females; C. dewulfi - Oliwa, Dolina Radości, Jasień, 6 females; C. odibilis - Oliwa, Dolina Radości, 2 females; C. vexans - Oliwa, 2 females; C. dunningstoni - Oliwa, 1 female; C. heliophilus - Oliwa, 1 female; C. minutissimus - Jasień, 1 female; C. subfasciipennis - Dolina Radości, 1 female. In addition to the females 29 males were caught which were attracted by females attacking the human bait.

Culicoides vexans and C. dewulfi are for the first time recorded in Gdańsk, and the latter species and C. dunningstoni are for the first time recorded on human bait in Poland. During the present investigations C. manchurienis and C. riethi previously recorded on human bait in Gdańsk were not found. So amongst 30 species of Culicoides that have been found in the city more than half of them, i.e. 16 spp., bite humans in the recreation and living quarters. In Gdańsk as in other localities of Polish lowland C. obsoletus and C. pallidicornis are the most aggressive species towards humans.

References

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