



**A New Phytotelm Plant, *Crinum moorei* (Asparagales: Amaryllidaceae), for the Americas and Its Mosquito Inhabitant (Diptera: Culicidae) in Ecuador**

Authors: Navarro, Juan-Carlos, Enriquez, Sandra, Vaca, Franklin, and Benitez-Ortiz, Washington

Source: Florida Entomologist, 96(3) : 1224-1227

Published By: Florida Entomological Society

URL: <https://doi.org/10.1653/024.096.0374>

---

BioOne Complete ([complete.BioOne.org](https://complete.BioOne.org)) is a full-text database of 200 subscribed and open-access titles in the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences published by nonprofit societies, associations, museums, institutions, and presses.

Your use of this PDF, the BioOne Complete website, and all posted and associated content indicates your acceptance of BioOne's Terms of Use, available at [www.bioone.org/terms-of-use](https://www.bioone.org/terms-of-use).

Usage of BioOne Complete content is strictly limited to personal, educational, and non - commercial use. Commercial inquiries or rights and permissions requests should be directed to the individual publisher as copyright holder.

---

BioOne sees sustainable scholarly publishing as an inherently collaborative enterprise connecting authors, nonprofit publishers, academic institutions, research libraries, and research funders in the common goal of maximizing access to critical research.

A NEW PHYTOTELM PLANT, *CRINUM MOOREI*  
(ASPARAGALES: AMARYLLIDACEAE), FOR THE AMERICAS AND ITS  
MOSQUITO INHABITANT (DIPTERA: CULICIDAE) IN ECUADOR

JUAN-CARLOS NAVARRO<sup>1,2,3\*</sup>, SANDRA ENRIQUEZ<sup>3</sup>, FRANKLIN VACA<sup>3</sup> AND WASHINGTON BENITEZ-ORTIZ<sup>3</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Programa Prometeo-Senescyt, Quito, Ecuador; <sup>2</sup>Universidad Central de Venezuela, Instituto de Zoología y  
Ecología Tropical, Caracas, Venezuela; <sup>3</sup>Centro Internacional de Zoonosis (CIZ),  
Universidad Central del Ecuador (UCE), Quito, Ecuador

\*Corresponding author; E-mail: jcnovac@gmail.com / juan.navarro@ciens.ucv.ve

Phytotelmata are water-impounding structures formed by non-aquatic plants, such as modified leaves (*Heliconia*), leaf axils (Bromeliaceae and Araceae), flowers (Marantaceae), perforated internodes (bamboo), stem holes or depressions, rot-holes in tree trunks or branches (tree-holes), open fruits (cacao pods and coconuts) and fallen leaves (spathes of palms and Musaceae). The word was coined by Varga (1928) and derived from Greek words: *phyton* (plant) and *telma* (pool) and has been adopted into English (Maguire 1971; Fish 1983). The singular in English is phytotelma (or phytotelm), and plural is phytotelmata (or phytotelms). The term has been adopted in Spanish as fitotelma/fitotelmata.

A short review of the biota and community structure of taxa with phytotelmata was made by Maguire (1971), followed by comprehensive book with contributed chapters (Frank & Lounibos 1983). The non-taxonomic group of taxa with phytotelmata is represented by members of at least 29 plant families (Fish 1983), mostly monocotyledons, but some dicotyledons can form treeholes. In the Neotropics, the most important phytotelmata are Apiaceae, Araceae, Bromeliaceae, Poaceae, Heliconiaceae, Marantaceae, Musaceae, Sarraceniaceae, Strelitziaceae and Zingiberaceae, including an uncompiled and probably long list of plant families providing fruits or fallen leaves. There are no lists of plant families that form tree-holes. An extensive bibliography of the biota inhabiting bromeliad leaf axils (Frank 1996) has been updated frequently since then.

Immature mosquitoes (Diptera: Culicidae) are well represented among the inhabitants of phytotelmata, and they include some important disease vectors. Some mosquitoes show a species-specific association with phytotelmata species (e.g., Maguire 1971; Fish 1983; Frank 1983; Navarro et al. 1995), representing an ideal system for biogeographical analyses (Navarro et al. 2007) and altitudinal analyses (Navarro et al. 2010).

In a survey for mosquito vectors biodiversity in Ecuador, we collected in a locality 90 km from Quito, at San Miguel de los Bancos at N 0° 01' 25.37" W 78° 53' 42.74" and 1,180 m in Pichincha Province. This locality is in the southern part of the ecological corridor of the Andes Chocó, in the

northwest of the Ecuadorian Andes cordillera. The average annual temperature is 24 °C (13-32 °C), 86% RH, and 14 rainy days/month (INAMHI 2009) in an evergreen mountain forest with primary forest relicts.

We found several mosquito species associated with the following phytotelmata: fallen leaves of "platanillo" (*Musa velutina* H. Wendl. et Drude [Musaceae]), axils of "camacho" (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium* (L.) Schott [Araceae]), inflorescences of "bijao" (*Calathea lutea* (Aubl.) Schult. [Marantaceae]), axils of "guaycundo" (*Mezobromelia capituligera* (Griseb.) J.R. Grant [Bromeliaceae]), internodes of a bamboo (*Guadua angustifolia* Kunth [Poaceae]), bracts of *Heliconia* aff. *bihai* (L.) L. (Heliconiaceae), and also in the axils of the main subject of this paper, *Crinum moorei* Hook. f. (Amaryllidaceae).

*Crinum moorei* (Figs. 1 and 2) is a native of South Africa and is found in the South African eastern seaboard coastal forest from the northern Eastern Cape in the south to northern KwaZulu-Natal. It grows well in large colonies in light shade at higher altitudes if protected from frost. This plant was introduced on the continent, growing in botanical gardens in the Americas, and probably is spread by commercial sales and by gardeners exchanging plants. The name *Crinum* is derived from the Greek *krinon*: lily (Verdoorn 1961).

The common names are: Natal lily, Moore's crinum (English); boslelie, Natal-lelie (Afrikaans); Umnduze (Zulu); crino, lirio, lirio del Orinoco (Spanish). It is one of the larger members of the worldwide tropical to temperate ornamental family Amaryllidaceae. The family includes the European narcissi and daffodils.

The large bulb of *C. moorei* rests just under the surface of the soil but has an elongate neck, which protrudes a further 200-300 mm above ground. The long, flat, dark green leaves (up to 1 m long; about 200 mm wide), emerge in a rosette from the neck which also produces a long flowering stalk in summer of 1.2 m or more, topped by 5-10 large, open, white to pale pink flowers (Govaerts 1999).

Other Amaryllidaceae reported as phytotelmata are: *Crinum asiaticum* L. (Japan); *C. giganteum* Andr. (Sudan); *C. hybridum* Hort. (Java); *Crinum* sp. (Tanzania) and *Hymenocallis ma-*



Fig. 1. Patch of *Crinum moorei* plants with a close-up of its flower at the bottom left corner.

*cleana* Nichols (Java) (Fish 1983; Kitching 2000). *Crinum moorei* is the first report of this family as phytotelmata in the Americas, and the mosquito that inhabits it in the Americas has adapted to it, but evolved in other plants.

A closely related plant in New Zealand, *CollospERMUM hastatus* (Colenso) Skotts. (Liliaceae) has been reported as a phytotelm with a native mosquito *Culex asteliae* Belkin and the non-native mosquito *Aedes (Finlaya) notoscriptus* Skuse as inhabitants of its axils (Dumbleton 1968; Deraiik 2004, 2005)

*C. moorei* has two records in Ecuador, Azuay Province, plants cultivated in a garden, at 2,320 m at Cuenca, recorded in Missouri Botanical Garden (collection number 11737), and in Los Rios Province, rio Palenque, Quevedo - Santo Domingo at 220 m (collection number 13559) (Jørgensen & León-Yánes 1999).

The larvae and pupae were collected in more than 50 *C. moorei* plants (Nov 2012, Jan-Feb 2013), a scant 3-10 ml of clean rainfall water in the axils. The species was identified in 4th instar and adult females and males as *Wyeomyia (Dendromyia) complosa* (Dyar) (Diptera: Culicidae) *sensu* Motta & Lourenço de Oliveira (2000).

The subgenus *Dendromyia* includes six species: *Wy. luteoventralis* Theobald, *Wy. ypsipola* Dyar, *Wy. jocosa* (Dyar & Knab), *Wy. testei* Senevet & Abonnenc, *Wy. trifurcata* Clastrier and *Wy. complosa*. Even though *Wy. complosa* is less typical of *Dendromyia* because of differences in the maxilla and siphon of the larva, it still shares the group characters of *Dendromyia* (Motta & Lourenço de Oliveira 2000).

Most *Dendromyia* develop in *Heliconia* and Marantaceae although *Wy. ypsipola* and *Wy. jocosa* also develop in Araceae. *Wy. complosa* has been collected in "sororoca" (*Phenakospermum guyanense* (Rich.) Endl. [Strelitziaceae]) in forest in Belém, State of Pará, Brazil (Motta & Lourenço de Oliveira 2000) and also in *Heliconia* and Araceae (*Dieffenbachia* sp.) (Heinemann & Belkin 1977, 1978 a,b). *Wy. complosa* has been reported from Panamá (type locality), French Guiana, Costa Rica, Guyana, Trinidad, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela and Ecuador (Guimarães 1997). In Ecuador, *Wy. complosa* has been collected from Los Rios, Quevedo, SW of Pichilingue and Cañar, Cochancay, 86 km E of Guayaquil, 280 m (Heinemann & Belkin 1979) both in leaf axils of a terrestrial aroid (*Montrichardia*) and leaf axils of *Heliconia*.



Fig. 2. Close-up view of a *Crinum moorei* axil filled with water, providing a phytotelm.

*Crinum moorei* is a new phytotelmata record for this species and perhaps is a normal development site for mosquitoes in Ecuador. However, little is known about the ecology and bionomics of this species. In the same location, the *Xanthosoma sagittifolium* plantation held immatures of another *Wyeomyia* species, so perhaps there is niche segregation.

The authors thank: JP Salazar, P Lahuatte, C Pérez, and E Villacres for field assistance. Dr. C. Cerón (Herbario "Alfredo Paredes QAP"-UCE), for identification of plants. J. Howard Frank and L. P. Lounibos for discussion about phytotelmata distribution and also JHF for suggestions on the manuscript. T. Zavortink for helpful discussion about the identification of the mosquito species. Family Gordillo Pulupa for their hospitality and logistic in the sampling locality. Programa Prometeo-Senescyt-Ecuador funded JC Navarro.

#### SUMMARY

A new phytotelma plant for the Americas is recorded for San Miguel de los Bancos, Pichincha Province, Ecuador. In the leaf axils of *Crinum moorei* Hook. f. (Amaryllidaceae) were collected larvae and pupae of a common mosquito, *Wyeomy-*

*ia (Dendromyia) complosa* (Dyar) (Diptera: Culicidae: Sabethini). This plant is a South African native, introduced into several countries, but never reported as a habitat for immature mosquitoes. We provide notes about its botanical and ecological characteristics, and also of the mosquito associated at this locality.

Key Words: leaf axils, Natal lily, *Wyeomyia (Dendromyia) complosa*

#### RESUMEN

Una nueva planta phytotelma para el continente Americano es registrada en San Miguel de los Bancos, Provincia de Pichincha, Ecuador. En las axilas de *Crinum moorei* Hook, f. (Amaryllidaceae) fueron colectadas larvas y pupas de la especie de mosquito *Wyeomyia (Dendromyia) complosa* (Dyar) (Diptera: Culicidae: Sabethini). Esta planta es nativa de Africa del Sur, y ha sido introducida en varios países, pero nunca había sido señalada como hábitat para las fases inmaduras de mosquitos. Se hacen comentarios botánicos acerca de la planta así como también del mosquito asociado en la localidad.

Palabras Clave: axilas de hojas, lirio, *Wyeomyia (Dendromyia) complosa*

## REFERENCES CITED

- DERRAIK, J. G. B. 2004. A survey of the mosquito (Diptera: Culicidae) fauna of the Auckland Zoological Park. *New Zealand Entomol.* 27: 51-55.
- DERRAIK, J. G. B. 2005. Mosquitoes breeding in phytotelmata in native forests in the Wellington region, New Zealand. *New Zealand J. Ecol.* 29: 185-191.
- DUMBLETON, L. J. 1968. A synopsis of the New Zealand mosquitoes (Diptera Culicidae) and a key to the larvae. *Tuatara* 16: 167-179.
- FISH, D. 1983. Phytotelmata: flora and fauna, pp. 1-27 *In* J. H. Frank and L. P. Lounibos [eds.], *Phytotelmata: terrestrial plants as hosts for aquatic insect communities*. Plexus, Medford, NJ.
- FRANK J. H. 1983. Bromeliad phytotelmata and their biota, especially mosquitoes, pp. 101-128 *In* J. H. Frank and L. P. Lounibos [eds.], *Phytotelmata: terrestrial plants as hosts for aquatic insects communities*. Plexus, Medford, N.J.
- FRANK, J. H. 1996. Bromeliad Biota. <http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/frank/bromeliadbiota/bromfit.htm> Seen Dec 2012.
- FRANK, J. H., AND LOUNIBOS, L. P. 1983. Phytotelmata: terrestrial plants as hosts for aquatic insects communities. Plexus, Medford, NJ.
- GUIMARÃES, J. H. 1997. Systematic Database of Diptera of the Americas South of the United States, Family Culicidae. Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo/Ed. Pleide. São Paulo. 286 pp.
- GOVAERTS, R. 1999. World Checklist of Seed Plants 3(1, 2a & 2b): 1-1532. Continental Publishing, Deurne, Belgium.
- HEINEMANN S. J., AND BELKIN J. N. 1977. Collection records of the project "Mosquitoes of Middle America" 8. Central America: Belize (BH), Guatemala (GUA), El Salvador (SAL), Honduras (HON), Nicaragua (NI, NIC). *Mosq. Syst.* 9: 403-454.
- HEINEMANN, S. J., AND BELKIN, J. N. 1978a. Collection records of the project "Mosquitoes of Middle America" 10. Panama, including Canal Zone (PA, GG). *Mosq. Syst.* 10: 119-196.
- HEINEMANN S. J., AND BELKIN J. N. 1978b. Collection records of the project "Mosquitoes of Middle America" 11. Venezuela (VZ); Guianas: French Guiana (FG, FGC), Guyana (GUY), Surinam (SUR). *Mosq. Syst.* 10: 365-459.
- HEINEMANN S. J., AND BELKIN, J. N. 1979. Collection records of the project "Mosquitoes of Middle America" 13. South America: Brazil (BRA, BRAP, BRB), Ecuador (ECU), Peru (PER), Chile (CH): *Mosq. Syst.* 11: 61-118.
- INAMHI. 2009. Anuario meteorológico 2009. Instituto nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología, República del Ecuador.
- JØRGENSEN, P. M., AND LEÓN-YÁNES, S. 1999. Catalogue of the Vascular Plants of Ecuador: 1-1181. Missouri Botanical Garden Press, St. Louis.
- KITCHING, R. L. 2000. Food webs and container habitats: The natural history and ecology of phytotelmata. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. xiii + 431 pp.
- MAGUIRE, B. 1971. Phytotelmata: Biota and community structure determination in plant-held waters. *Annu. Rev. Ecol. Syst.* 2: 439-464.
- MOTTA A. M., AND LOURENÇO-DE-OLIVEIRA, R. 2000. The subgenus *Dendromyia* Theobald: A review with redescription of four species (Diptera: Culicidae). *Mem. Inst. Oswaldo Cruz* 95: 649-683.
- NAVARRO, J. C., INGUNZA, J., FERNÁNDEZ, Z., AND BARRERA, R. 1995. Mosquitoes and bromeliads: species-specific selectivity patterns on the northern coast and southern Guiana Shields in Venezuela. *In* Mosquito vector control and biology in Latin America - Fifth Symposium. *J. American Mosq. Control Assoc.* 11: 345-346.
- NAVARRO J. C, LIRIA, J., PIÑANGO, H., AND BARRERA, R. 2007. Biogeographic area relationships in Venezuela: A parsimony analysis of Culicidae-phytotelmata relationships distributions in National Parks. *Zootaxa* 1547: 1-19.
- NAVARRO, J. C., ZORRILLA, A., F DEL VENTURA, F., AND LIRIA, J. 2010. Registros de mayor altitud para mosquitos (Diptera: Culicidae) para Venezuela. *Rev. Biol. Trop. (Internat. J. Biol. Conserv.)* 58(1): 245-254.
- VARGA, L. 1928. Ein interessanter Biotop der Biocönose von Wasserorganism. *Biologische Zentralblatt* 48: 143-162.
- VERDOORN, I. C. 1961. *Crinum moorei*. The Flowering Plants of Africa 34: t. 1351.