

## **Bombylioidea (Diptera: Bombyliidae; Mythicomyiidae) from the island of Sokotra**

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### **Abstract**

Previous records of Bombyliidae from the islands of Sokotra and Abd-el-Kuri are summarised. Recently collected specimens are identified. The family Mythicomyiidae is recorded from Sokotra for the first time and two species of *Empidideicus*, *E. socotrae* and *E. variegatus*, are described as new; the *Phthiria* sp. previously reported from Sokotra is described as *P. socotrae*. There are now a total of 16 named species of Bombylioidea identified from the islands, of which 12 are believed to be endemic.

**Key words:** Bombyliidae, Mythicomyiidae, Sokotra, *Empidideicus*, *Phthiria*, taxonomy

### **Introduction**

The island of Sokotra is the largest (approx. 115 x 35 km) of a group of islands, including Abd-el-Kuri and The Brothers, lying off the coast of Africa east of Cape Guardafui. Although Sokotra is closer to Africa (approx. 220 km) than Arabia (approx. 350 km), it is administratively part of the Republic of Yemen. It is a continental fragment composed chiefly of granite and limestone and rises to a height of over 1500 metres. Consequently it has a varied climate and vegetation, including a high proportion of endemic species. The most recent general account of the island (Doe 1992) includes a bibliography and chapters on insects by K.M. Guichard and plants by A. Radcliffe-Smith.

Bombyliidae were collected for the first time on Sokotra and Abd-el-Kuri islands by W.R.O. Grant in 1898 and described by Ricardo (1903). They comprised eight species of which four were described as new. Becker (1910) described specimens collected by O.