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SHORT COMMUNICATION

A phoretic association between a bryozoan and an insect in a Nigerian Lake

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KEY WORDS: Bryozoa, *Caenis*, Ephemeroptera, insecta, Nigeria, phoresis, *Plumatella*.

Among the larval Ephemeroptera of the genus *Caenis* s.l. collected from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture lake, Ibadan, Nigeria, in 1989, one had a curious organism attached to the gill cover (Figure 1). The specimen was sent to the Natural History Museum, London, for identification (courtesy

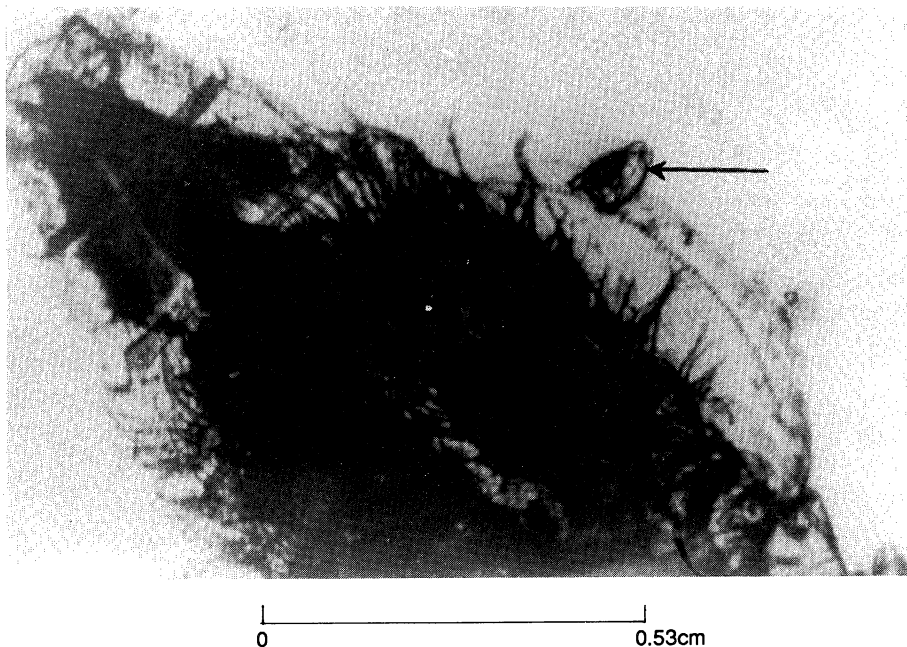


Figure 1. Abdominal region of *Caenis* s.l. sp. larva, with arrow showing *Plumatella* sp. attached to the gill cover.

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of Professor M. T. Gillies), and was described by Peter Hayward as a statoblast (a resting/dispersal body) of a phylactoleamate bryozoan, *Plumatella* species.

Phoretic associations between Ephemeroptera and other aquatic organisms are not unknown. Certain Simuliidae are known to be phoretic on Ephemeroptera larvae (Berner 1954, Disney 1971, Germain & Grenier 1967, Gillies 1974). In these cases the simuliids derive benefits from the association through wider dispersal by the Ephemeroptera larvae. In the case of two baetid Ephemeroptera, *Symbiocloeon* (Muller-Liebenau & Heard 1979) and *Mutelocloeon* (Gillies & Elouard 1990), the Ephemeroptera larvae are phoretic on mussels (Mollusca). Their associations are presumed to be commensalism, the Ephemeroptera escaping certain hazards by living within the cavity of mussels.

The *Plumatella* statoblast is a dormant stage which normally drifts on the surface but on germination adheres to any handy object (Hayward, pers. comm.). Therefore its association with the *Caenis* larva is accidental, but it may aid in dispersal.

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