



NEW ZEALAND BIOSECURE
Entomology Laboratory



Coquillettidia (Coquillettidia) iracunda (Walker)

No Common Name

NZ Status: Endemic



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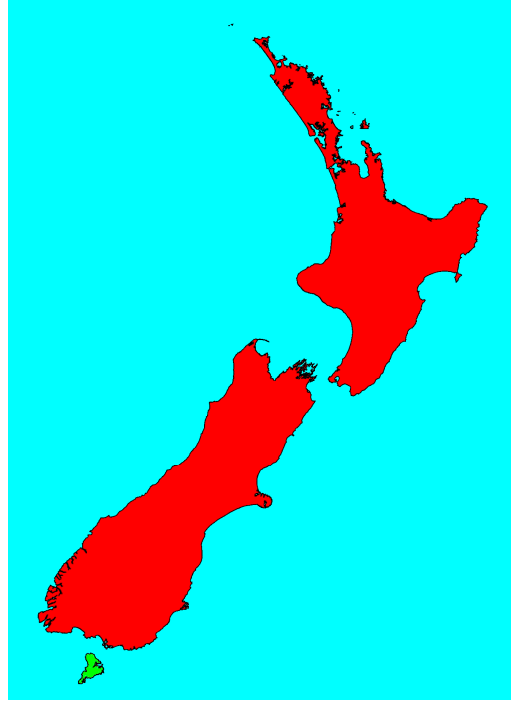
Vector and Pest Status

Coquillettidia iracunda is a known pest of livestock and humans (Graham, 1939). To date, there is no knowledge of this species' vector status.

Geographic Distribution

Belkin (1968) recorded *Coquillettidia iracunda* as present in North Auckland, the West Coast of the North Island, Otago and Westland, as well as on Great Barrier Island and Mayor Island.

More recent mosquito surveillance by New Zealand BioSecure has collected this species from areas around Napier, Blenheim, the Wairarapa, and on the Kapiti Coast (New Zealand BioSecure, unpublished data, 2002-8).



NB. This map denotes the general areas where this species has been recorded, not actual distribution

Taxonomy

This species is one of two species within this genus in New Zealand, this species being classified within the subgenus *Coquillettidia*.

Adults of *Coq. iracunda* are easily distinguished by their smaller size, and dark scaling in the middle of the abdominal sternites forming a row of triangles (Belkin, 1968; Miller & Phillips, 1952).

Larvae of *Coquillettidia* genus, have modified siphons which they use to attach themselves to the submerged stems and roots of plants, making them difficult to find; subsequently there is currently no description of *Coquillettidia iracunda*. Larvae have recently been collected by Rachel Cane and Mark Disbury (New Zealand BioSecure, 2007) and a description is underway.

Habits and Habitat

All *Coquillettidia* species have larvae and pupae which use submerged vegetation to breathe. These life stages do not visit the surface for oxygen as in most mosquito species, but instead remain fixed to the plant stem. Larvae pierce the plants exterior using a modified siphon, and once they have developed into pupa the pupae will attach to the plant through modified trumpets on the pupas head. As a result of this specialised behaviour, this species occupies shallow margins of ponds and lakes which are choked with vegetation. These habitats are usually in native forest but may be found close to agricultural or urban areas (Belkin, 1962).

Adults of *Coq. iracunda* can be found resting on vegetation and nearby banks of breeding sites, and have been recorded biting in these areas (Lee *et al*, 1988). They have also been found far from breeding sites; this and their presence on Great Barrier and Mayor Islands indicates a considerable flight range (Belkin, 1968).

Coq. iracunda are predominately night biters in scrub and farmland areas where they are troublesome to stock (Graham, 1939). They have been found to be most active just after sunset, but are also found in low numbers during the day (Cane, 2008), and will bite during the day in shady bush areas (Baber, 1934). Derraik (2005) recorded instances of day time biting at a plant nursery and several collections were made of *Coq. iracunda* from inside houses.

References

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