

The Oriental eye fly that transmits conjunctivitis newly recorded in China

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The Oriental eye fly (*Siphunculina funicola*) is newly recorded in China. Credit: Dr. Xiaoyan Liu

The conjunctivitis-transmitting Oriental eye fly (*Siphunculina funicola*)

has been recorded for the first time in China. In the same paper, published in the open access journal *ZooKeys*, a team of three scientists further describe three species of the same genus, which are new to science.

The studied flies in the genus *Siphunculina* present a number of curious insects, including the grass flies and the Oriental eye fly - a species that transmits conjunctivitis and other eye diseases to both humans and domestic animals. As the larvae feed on faeces or thrive in decaying flesh, they can usually be found in [bird nests](#), excrement or carcasses.

The scientists Dr. Xiaoyan Liu, Huazhong Agricultural University, China, Dr. Ding Yang, China Agricultural University and Dr. Emilia P. Nartshuk, Russian Academy of Sciences, collected the Oriental eye fly in Hainan, the southernmost province of China.

Previously, the species had been known to inhabit other countries in eastern and southern Asia, where the flies amass around people and cattle, causing considerable annoyance and spreading eye diseases.



Siphunculina bulbifera is one of the new grass fly species. Credit: Dr. Xiaoyan Liu



Siphunculina shangyongensis is one of the new grass fly species. Credit: Dr. Xiaoyan Liu

More information: Xiao-Yan Liu et al, Three new species and one new record of the genus *Siphunculina* from China (Diptera, Chloropidae), *ZooKeys* (2017). [DOI: 10.3897/zookeys.687.13156](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.687.13156)

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