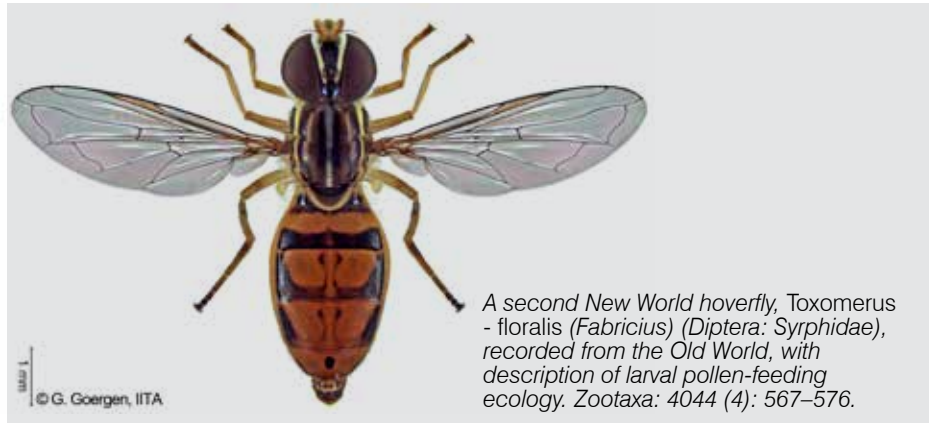


Discovery of a second New World hoverfly newly introduced into the Afrotropics

In the framework of collaboration between IITA and the [Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren](#), Belgium, hoverflies preserved in IITA's biodiversity center at Cotonou were recently studied using molecular biology techniques in support of morphological identification. Surprisingly some specimens from Benin and Cameroon could not be identified using existing morphological keys for Syrphidae of the Afrotropical region.

DNA sequencing and comparison with publicly available [barcode data](#) revealed the presence in Africa of a species originating from South America. While subsequent collection efforts showed that the species named *Toxomerus floralis* (Fabricius) is currently widely spread in Togo, Benin, Nigeria (including the IITA campus at Ibadan), and Cameroon, the full extent of its geographic distribution within the African continent remains to be determined.



A second New World hoverfly, *Toxomerus floralis* (Fabricius) (Diptera: Syrphidae), recorded from the Old World, with description of larval pollen-feeding ecology. *Zootaxa*: 4044 (4): 567–576.

This is only the second known established introduction of a non-African hoverfly species in the Afrotropics.

Interestingly, the larvae of this species feed on pollen, which is uncommon within the subfamily Syrphinae. Moreover, it is the only Syrphinae species of which the larvae feed on pollen of at least two

plant species from different families (Cyperaceae and Rubiaceae). This example illustrates well the practical application of molecular techniques as a reliable identification tool and underpins the utility of any contribution to such a globally accessible database. (Please contact g.goergen@cgiar.org for full scientific article).

Ghana fetes farmers in a Farmers' Day

IITA participated in celebrating and acknowledging the contributions of local farmers in Ghana last December.

The National Farmers Day is a day of celebration and appreciation of the

good work by the farmers and awarding of gifts to the farmers. This is celebrated every first Friday of December each year and includes fisherfolk and all farmers.

The celebration is coordinated by the Finance and Administration Subcommittee of the Municipal Assembly of the Municipal Director of Food and Agriculture (Charles Atse), which includes the Municipal Budget Officer, Deputy Municipal Coordinating Director, the Chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee of the Municipal Assembly, and the Chief Farmer of Suhum.

The farmers' day took place at Aponoapono, a large village in Suhum town. Both men and women farmers participated in the celebration.

The event was graced by award winners, farmers, a team from IITA led

by [Elizabeth Parkes](#), Janet Nkurumah-Sey, Olaniyi Oluwatobi, and Anthony Acquatey-Mensah. There were also traditional rulers from Aponoapono and neighboring villages. The Municipal Chief Executive, the Municipal Coordinating Director, the Municipal Commander of Police, some Heads of Departments, general public, and members of the press also attended.

IITA mounted an exhibition led by the Cassava Breeding unit that showed vitamin A cassava, high quality cassava flour, and IITA publications and posters. The cassava variety had the largest roots on a single stem exhibited during the occasion and attracted a lot of visitors. The farmers, the community chief, and the Commander of Police showed interested in this variety.



Cassava Breeder Elizabeth Parkes attending to farmers and guests at the IITA stand.

Staff proud to work for IITA

A staff satisfaction survey undertaken by the IITA Human Resources Service (HRS) and Management in 2015 has revealed that members of staff are proud to work for the Institute.

They ranked “pride in working for IITA” highest among other parameters. The survey also highlighted other key areas where the Institute is excelling as well as areas needing improvement.

About 618 regular staff members from the Central, East, Southern, and West Africa hubs as well as the directorates participated in the exercise. The survey results were analyzed, and the report considered by the HRS Committee and the Board of Trustees.

In a message to members of staff on 21 January, [Kwame Akuffo-Akoto](#), DDG Corporate Services said:

“It is gratifying to note that on a five-point scale of 1–5 (with 5 representing “Strongly Agree” and 1 “Strongly Disagree”), *“Pride in working for IITA”* was assessed at 4.8. Also the same rating was recorded regarding *“Staff being satisfied that they are making meaningful contributions to the work of the Institute”*.”

He added that overall, staff affirmed that the Institute is strong (with a rating of 4.1 and above) in the following areas:

- setting clear goals and objectives
- management of the Institute
- consultation; communication
- positive image to staff’s family and friends
- encouraging teamwork
- enhancing staff’s skills and improving performance health and safety
- promoting respectful relations between men and women in the workplace
- maintaining an enabling and conducive work environment
- creating a sense of belongingness among staff.

Areas of concern highlighted by the survey include:

- work-life balance fair compensation
- regular review of staff development needs
- provision of career advancement and learning opportunities
- increasing staff confidence to report harassment and bullying.



Staff members having a cordial discussion in Ibadan.

Akuffo-Akoto assured members of staff that Management will continue to address these concerns and take appropriate action to address all aspects that are classified in the report as “Medium Range” (where average rating is equal to 4) and all those areas classified as “Concerns” (where average rating is less than 4).

He also enjoined all staff to continue to seek the good of [IITA](#) and give the Institute their very best.



Happy staff members during a seminar at the Conference Center in Ibadan.

Announcement

Training of Trainers (ToT) on ITC’s Trade Intelligence Tools

(Market Access Map, Standards Map, Trade Map), 8-11 March, 2016, IITA Ibadan

For more enquires, contact info@ieom-ng.org; op.akande@gmail.com; IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org.

Got a story to share? Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org), Jeffrey T. Oliver (j.oliver@cgiar.org), Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org), or Adaobi Umeokoro (a.umeokoro@cgiar.org).