

## CARTA AO EDITOR

### HOUSE INVASION BY SECONDARY TRIATOMINE SPECIES IN MAMBAÍ, GOIÁS-BRAZIL

Forattini *et al*<sup>2 3 4</sup> have extensive documentation of the invasion of the peridomicile by *Triatoma sordida* and *Panstrongylus megistus* after control of house dwelling *Triatoma infestans* in São Paulo state, Brazil. In the past houses in the municipality of Mambai, Goiás-Brazil were colonised mainly by *P. megistus*<sup>5</sup> but by 1973 this species had been dislocated from domiciliation by *T. infestans*<sup>6 7</sup>. In the 1970s *T. sordida* was found in chicken houses but rarely in the house and if so only in small numbers. Other potential house colonisers such as *P. megistus*, *Rhodnius neglectus* and *Triatoma pseudomaculata* existed in sylvatic habitats<sup>11</sup>. They had never been encountered in the peridomicile apart from two *P. megistus* adults caught on the wing in houses at night. Since the attack phase of the control programme of the Ministry of Health (SUCAM) in 1980 this situation

has changed and the data are shown in the Table. The situation regarding *T. infestans* and *T. sordida* will be discussed in a separate communication.

As can be seen from the table not only the species known to be house colonisers have entered the house but also purely sylvatic species such as *Triatoma costalimai* and *Panstrongylus diasi*. The ecology of the latter species is unknown but *T. costalimai* has been well studied in Mambai<sup>10 14</sup>. It is a rock dwelling species feeding mainly on lizards. A single example of *Triatoma williamsi* was captured by SUCAM personnel in Mambai in 1983. In the peridomicile SUCAM surveys in the area also recording *P. megistus*, *R. neglectus* and *T. pseudomaculata* in the domestic environment. The data cited here are from the vigilance mounted by the University of Brasilia. Only

Table - Number of times triatomines species were encountered in the peridomicile (other than *Triatoma infestans* and *Triatoma sordida*) 1981-1984 in Mambai, Goiás.

Species and locality (ID = intradomiciliary) (PD = peridomiciliary)	1981	1982	1983	1984
<i>Panstrongylus megistus</i>				
ID	-	-	2	1
PD	2	-	2	1
<i>Rhodnius neglectus</i>				
ID	2	2	2	1
PD	2	-	2	2
<i>Triatoma pseudomaculata</i>				
ID	-	-	-	-
PD	-	-	-	1
<i>Triatoma costalimai</i>				
ID	-	-	-	7
PD	-	-	-	-
<i>Panstrongylus diasi</i>				
ID	-	-	1	3
PD	-	-	-	-

on one occasion however was an actual colony observed and this was of *T. pseudomaculata* in a chicken house in Fazenda Humburana. All other examples captured have been adults which almost certainly arrived on the wing. *R. neglectus* has been documented in colony in a chicken house in the Federal District<sup>9</sup> and is said to be a problem in Goiás<sup>16</sup>. We have never found the sylvatic ecotope of *P. megistus* in Mambai but it is likely to be in marsupial nests<sup>12</sup>. Similarly we have recently identified an adult *Panstrongylus geniculatus* in a house capture 40 kilometres from Mambai which may have had its origin in an armadillo burrow<sup>1</sup>.

One factor which may account for the increase in the number of records of sylvatic species in houses could be that our vigilance activities have increased since 1980, but we doubt if this is the whole story. The same vigilance procedures have been in operation but the Table shows an increase in notifications in 1983-1984. What attracts flying adults of these species to houses is unclear; it could be electric light but we have had poor results with traps both in Mambai and previously in São Felipe a *P. megistus* endemic areas. More important is whether such invasions really represent a threat of reestablishing a domestic transmission cycle with the danger of further human transmission as is often cited in the literature<sup>8 13 15</sup>. This is precisely the information lacking in relation to the situation described above for no documentation exists of fresh human infections occurring after secondary invasion by one of the species discussed above. We doubt whether these invasions represent a real threat in Mambai since to date with one exception only adults have been reported. However up to the present time SUCAM sprays selectively all houses where a triatomine is captured irrespective of species so it will be difficult to make observations of colonisation in this area.

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Sr. Editor,

No livreto Programas e Resumos dos XX Congresso da Sociedade Brasileira de Medicina Tropical e I Congresso da Sociedade Latino-Americana de Medicina Tropical, realizados em Salvador – Bahia, de 5 a 9 de fevereiro de 1984, foi publicado o resumo 227 – Estudos sobre a epidemiologia das Leishmanioses no Ceará – III – Flebotomíneos em área de Leishmaniose Tegumentar, de autoria de Ribeiro, A. L., Alencar, J. E., Falcão, A. L.

No referido trabalho declara-se que “As espécies de flebotomíneos discriminados como vetores dessa parasitose para o homem são as seguintes:

*Lutzomyia migonei*, *L. whitmani*, *L. pessoai*, *L. intermedia*, *L. micropyga* (Pessoa e Martins, 1982) e *L. (P) wellcomei* (Ready et al, 1982).” Ocorre que a citação do livro de Pessoa e Martins, edição de 1982, não incluiu a *L. micropyga* nesse relato, visto que a referida espécie foi encontrada com infecção do intestino posterior de promastigotas e que “a hipótese mais provável, segundo os citados autores (Sherlock e Pessoa) é que... sejam formas evolutivas de *Leishmania* de parasita de lagartixas”.

Agradeceria se essa editoria publicasse este esclarecimento para restabelecimento da verdade científica.

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