Records of assassin bug species (reduviidae, heteroptera) reported biting man

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Abstract

In southern Africa Acanthaspis obscura Stal, Pirates conspurcatus Distant, Rhinocoris segmentarius (Germar) and Panto-feistes pinniceps Stal inflict painful bites on humans. Serious consequences can develop. This is unknown to the public in general. Adult A. obscura and P. conspurcatus are responsible for the greatest number of bites because they are positively phototropic. R. segmentarius is not attracted to light but is the most common local species. Bites happen accidentally and could largely be avoided if the bugs could be recognized. The first three species have a wide distribution. Various insects are preyed on. The R. segmentarius female can lay 358 fertile eggs in six batches over a period of 77 days without copulating once in this period. Adults are most active in mid-summer although found throughout the year. These three species are abundant in some years and scarce in others. Preventive measures include screening homes and decoy lights. Control involves spraying with carbaryl.

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The Reduviidae are a large cosmopolitan family of the order Hemiptera (true bugs). They can be perceived as slightly unusual, but they are very common among the Hemiptera because almost all are terrestrial ambush predators (most other predatory Hemiptera are aquatic). The main examples of nonpredatory Reduviidae are some blood-sucking ectoparasites in the subfamily Triatominae. Though spectacular exceptions are known, most members of the family are fairly easily recognizable; they have a relatively These true bugs in the family Reduviidae are often overlooked, despite being beneficial as generalist predators of other insects. Learn more about these interesting bugs in this article... There are more than 160 species in the family Reduviidae (the assassin bugs, ambush bugs, and thread-legged bugs) in North America, many of which are fairly common. Most assassin bugs are medium-sized to large predators of crop pests, but the family does contain a few blood-sucking species. Even the beneficial insect predators can inflict a painful bite if handled carelessly, resulting in an inflammation that can persist for a few days. Adult assassin bugs are usually 1/2 to 3/4 long. Many species are brownish or blackish, but some species are brightly colored. Assassin bugs (Hemiptera: Reduviidae) are the largest clade of predatory non-holometabolous insects (6,800 described species) [1], [2] and one of the largest clades of predatory animals. Assassin bugs show a pattern of generalist and specialist species, with some taxa apparently feeding on a wide range of prey species and others being specialized on certain taxonomic groups [12], [22]. We compiled feeding records of Reduviidae from the literature and our own observations to investigate evolutionary patterns across the phylogeny. 15. Weirauch C, Munro JB (2009) Molecular phylogeny of the assassin bugs (Hemiptera: Reduviidae), based on mitochondrial and nuclear ribosomal genes. Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 53: 287–299. View Article.