

New Record of a Predatory Mite *Bochartia* sp.
(Erythraeidae : Acarina) Attacking certain Pests of
Groundnut and Sugarcane

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A variety of parasites and predators are known to attack pests of groundnut. Among the predators, a mite predating on different pests of groundnut has been recorded for the first time at Junagadh area of Gujarat State. The predator was identified by Dr. D. MacFarlane of C I E, London, as *Bochartia* sp. (Erythraeidae : Prostigmata : Acarina). The important morphological character of this mite is the long legs measuring 0.114 mm. Being an active mover, it could catch its hosts instantly and probe its stylet irrespective of parts like abdomen, legs, etc. The prey insect could move freely and survive for a maximum of 2 days inspite of being attacked. When the prey died, the predator detached itself and attacked another prey. Free movement of the prey also helped the predator in dispersal. This predator was found feeding on the leaf hoppers, *Empoasca kerri* Pruthi, *Balclutha hortensis* Lindb. and

Exitianus taeniaticeps (Kirchbaum), the mirid, *Trigonotylus doddi* (Dist.) and the lophopid, *Pyrilla perpusilla* (Dist.). It was able to attack about 4% of *B. hortensis* which is the major pest of groundnut in Junagadh (Nandagopal, unpublished), and 2-3% of the other sucking pests mentioned above. Occurrence of this predator is confined to July-August and its population declines by the end of September. A species of *Bochartia* was reported to attack, *Psylla mrrarayi* Mathur in Meghalaya to a considerable extent (Lahiri and Biswas, 1980).

Key words : Predatory mite, *Bochartia* sp., pests of groundnut, sugarcane.

REFERENCES

- Lahiri, A. R. and Biswas, S. 1980. Observation on the relative intensity of infestation on three species of cultivated plants by *Psylla mrrarayi* Mathur (Homoptera : Psyllidae) at Shillong, Meghalaya. *Bull. Zool. Surv. India*, 2, 125-127.