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 CIE, 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 teniaticeps (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 It was able to attack about 4% of B. hortensis which is the major pest of groundnut in Junagadh (Nandagopal, unpublished), and 2-3% of the other sucking pests mentioned above.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 mrarayi Mathur in Meghalaya to a considerable extent (Lahiri and Biswas, 1980).

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

REFERENCES