

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

RECORD OF TICKS (ACARINA : METASTIGMATA) ASSOCIATED WITH REPTILES IN ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN, CALCUTTA

The hard bodied ticks (Ixodidae) are of much economic importance as most of these are considered as potential carrier of variety of diseases in man and his domesticated stock. Considering the fact several attempts to study the tick species associated with animals present in captivity in Zoo-garden were made in different countries. But unfortunately in India they have not received much attention by the acarologists except Robinson (1926) and Sanyal *et al.* 1987.

The available records indicate that the first report on the study of ixodid ticks associated with animals in Zoological Garden, Calcutta was made by Robinson (1926). He recorded only one genus *Amblyomma* Containing two species viz., *helvolum* Koch, 1844 and *Javanensa* Supino, 1897 from *Geomyda grandis* and *Manis pentadactyla* respectively. The present note is so far the second report of tick species from animals present in the Zoological Garden, Calcutta.

The ticks were collected by the second author at random from two reptiles, *Varanus* sp. and *Naja naja*. All the specimens collected belong to a single species *Amblyomma helvolum* Koch. Further it was noticed that the shoulder region of the host animal was greatly preferred by the ticks. Altogether 40 m.m., 32 m.m. and 4 NN were recovered from *Varanus* sp. and 1 m., 8 m.m. and 3 NN were collected from *Naja naja*.

The present specimens of *A. helvolum* Koch are small sized heavily punctated ticks. There are six symmetrical pale spots on the scutum. The coxa I with two short and II-IV with single elongated spur.

The species is a common pest of large snakes and lizards. It is not serious from economic point of view but it causes discomfort to the animals.

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