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PREDATION BY SPIDERS ON MOSQUITOES RESTING IN HOUSES IN TANZANIA

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Whitmyre and Wills (1970) have described predation by the spider *Tegenaria domestica* on overwintering *Culex pipiens*. This note describes two observations of predation by jumping spiders (family: Salticidae) on mosquitoes resting in the flat-roofed "tembe" type houses of the Umbugwe tribe at Magugu, Tanzania. A fuller description of these houses is given by Smith (1964) in his paper on *Anopheles gambiae* Giles in the area.

The Tropical Pesticides Research Institute has an outstation at Magugu devoted to trials of insecticides in verandah trap huts (Smith, 1965). In June 1970, just after the long rains, large numbers of *Anopheles gambiae* species B and *Culex p. fatigans* Wied., and smaller numbers of *Anopheles funestus* Giles and *Mansonia uniformis* (Theo.) could be taken resting in the houses. While collections of *A. gambiae* for bioassays were

being made, it was noticed on two occasions that salticid spiders had caught mosquitoes, on one occasion a male *C. fatigans* and on the other a fed female *A. gambiae*. Salticid spiders of the same general appearance were quite a common sight on the inside and outside walls of houses at Magugu, and they were also found in the experimental huts. When the matter was raised with the laboratory staff they claimed to have seen spiders of this type catching mosquitoes in the experimental huts. Salticid spiders from experimental huts and houses were caught on this occasion, and later found to belong to two species: *Plexippus paykulli* (Aud.) and *Mene-merus bivittatus* (Dufour).

In October 1970 a more lengthy search of the houses was made, and the same two species collected, plus the following other species:

Family: Selenopidae

Selenops radiatus Latreille

Selenops vigilans Pocock

Family: Pholcidae

Smeringopus sp. near *arambourgi* Fage

Artema mauriciana Walck.

Family: Argiopidae

Araneus nauticus L. Koch

Family: Pisauridae

Euprostheno pavesii de Lessert

In the houses the *Selenops* were abundant though usually remaining hidden in cracks. The adults were large and would be unlikely to subsist on mosquitoes. The *Smeringopus* sp. and *Artema mauriciana* were resting in full view on an untidy tangle of threads beneath the ceilings. The mosquitoes were frequently seen resting on these threads close to the spiders themselves but were never seen to be attacked by them. The only spiders found in the experimental huts were *Smeringopus* sp. and the Salticids.

Whitmyre and Wills (*loc. cit.*) noted that at 45° F the *T. domestica* were more active than the mosquitoes and caught them without webs. In the "tembe" houses the fed *A. gambiae* remain motionless for long periods during the day and might be expected to be easy prey to the sharp-eyed and active jumping spiders, but the overall effect of spider predation on the resting mosquito population remains to be investigated.

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