

**A NEW RECORD OF *HEXAMERMIS* SP.  
(NEMATODA—MERMITHIDAE)  
PARASITIZING *SERINETHA AUGUR* FABR.  
(HETEROPTERA—COREIDAE)**

S. C. DHIMAN

Department of Zoology, M. S. College,  
Saharanpur 247001, India.

MEMBERS of the family Mermithidae play an important role in control of some species of insect pests<sup>1, 2</sup>. *Hexamermis* sp. has been reported from *Lygus pratensis*<sup>3</sup>, *Helopeltis theivora*<sup>4</sup> and *H. antoni*<sup>5</sup>. While working on *Serinetha augur* Fabr., a pest of *Schelecheira oleasa* (Kusum), *Hexamermis* sp. was found in the body cavity of the insect.

The bugs, which feed gregariously on fallen seeds of *S. oleasa*, during July to September, showed parasitization by the nematode, with a maximum during August, the percentage of parasitization varying from 30 to 45. Only male bugs were found infected and not a single female was parasitized.

The following changes in the infected males were observed—enlarged abdomen; dissolution of alimentary canal with only pharynx, oesophagus and rectum remaining intact; thoracic muscles, including wing muscles, entirely devoured by the parasite; inability of

the bugs to fly; reduction in hind wings (in few cases); reduced testes and less developed vasa deferentia; complete absorption of fat bodies by the parasite; and sterility of infected males.

At emergence of the parasite from the host, a large hole, usually in the abdomen, is formed followed by immediate death of the host. *Hexamermis* sp. from the Coreid member *S. augur* is a new record.

The author is obliged to the Deputy Director Horticulture-cum-Officer Incharge, Horticultural Experiment & Training Centre, Saharanpur, for the facility of study site and to Dr G. D. Garg for encouragement.

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3. Painter, R. H., *21st Ann. Rep. Quebec Soc. Prot. Plants*, 1929, p. 53.
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## NEWS

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### GENETIC ENGINEERING UNIT FOR BANGALORE [INDIA]

A Centre for research in genetic engineering is being set up at the Indian Institute of Science Bangalore.

A joint venture of the Indian Institute of Science and ASTRA, a Swedish pharmaceutical firm, the Centre would design and develop tools for genetic engineering research.

The Centre would be maintained by Indian scientists

and those working abroad would be provided an opportunity to return to the country and work in this advanced field. Initially the Centre would have fifteen scientists and fifteen technicians.

The ASTRA has contributed a sum of Rs 50 lakhs to the Institute for conducting research in biotechnology.

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