

Seasonal Abundance of Horseflies (Diptera: Tabanidae) in Suwaymah (Dead Sea area), Jordan

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ABSTRACT

Seasonal abundance and species richness of horseflies in the Suwaymah area, Jordan, were studied over a period of one year (January 2002 to December 2002). 12 species have been collected from the study area. By frequency of captured individuals, *Tabanus. albifacies* constituted 26.4% of the total collected specimens, followed by *T. sufis* (20.9%). *Chrysops flavipes* and *T. autumnalis* were the least common species, with relative abundances of 0.7% for each. *T. leleani* and *T. sufis* were the first species to appear during the season. The number of recovered species started to rise in April and then declined in October, and all species disappeared completely in November to February. By host, horses were the preferred animals (12 species), followed by camels (10 species) and then by cows (7 species). Disease transmission and seasonal abundance were also discussed.

Key words: Tabanidae, horseflies, seasonal abundance, Jordan

INTRODUCTION

In recent studies, we identified the horsefly fauna of Jordan (Al-Talafha *et al.*, 2004; 2005), however, both studies did not focus on the pattern of seasonal abundance of the horseflies in Jordan. To our knowledge, no previous studies in the Middle East were undertaken to identify the seasonal emergence pattern of horseflies. However, other studies in Europe (Krcmar & Durbesic, 1999), South America (Gonzalez, 1993; Barros, 2001) and North America (Mcelligott & Galloway 1991; Strickler & Walker 1993) addressed this issue.

Horse flies are known vectors of *Trypanosoma evansi* in the Middle East. In Jordan, Abo Shehada *et al.* (1999) reported on the prevalence of surra among