

## Hymenoptera as Prey of Robber Flies (Diptera: Asilidae) with New Prey Records

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### ABSTRACT

The abundance of Hymenoptera in the insect fauna of the world is reflected in the Asilidae Predator-Prey Database produced by Dr. Robert Lavigne. Of the approximate 58,024 prey in the database, 25,320 are Hymenoptera. Forty seven (47) of the 90 recognized families are represented with 508 genera and 833 species. *Apis mellifera* L. is widely preyed upon by robber flies and represents 9,538 of the Hymenoptera prey; seven (7) of the 10 subfamilies of robber flies represented by 65 genera, prey upon *A. mellifera*. Potential explanations for the large number of Hymenoptera and *A. mellifera* taken by robber flies are provided. The numbers of Hymenoptera prey are examined based on subfamily, genera and species classifications. The most frequently preyed upon genera are referenced. Additionally, new records of Hymenoptera as prey are presented. Among all records, the largest number of genera and species taken as prey belong to the families Ichneumonidae and Sphecidae, respectively.

*Key words:* Hymenoptera, *Apis mellifera*, prey, robber flies, Asilidae, Diptera.

### INTRODUCTION

Hymenoptera is one of the most diverse orders of insects with only Coleoptera having more described species. According to Pickering (2005), in most faunas, Hymenoptera constitute about 20% of the insect species. This abundance of Hymenoptera is also incidentally reflected in the web based Diptera: Asilidae