

Report of the presence of phlebotomus (phlebotomus) salehi mesghali in Sri Lanka: A potential cutaneous leishmaniasis vector

Gajapathy, K. and Surendran, S.N.

Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, University of Jaffna, Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Cutaneous leishmaniasis (CL) is emerging as a serious public health threat in Sri Lanka and more than 2000 cases have been reported during the past nine years. The parasite responsible for CL has been identified as *Leishmania donovani* zymodeme MON -37. *Phlebotomus* (*Phlebotomus*) *salehi* is a proven vector of oriental sore or CL in India. *Phlebotomus* (*Euphlebotomus*) *argentipes* sensu lato, which is a vector of *L. donovani* that causes visceral leishmaniasis (VL) in India, is suspected to be a vector of CL in Sri Lanka. But the vector of CL in Sri Lanka is yet to be determined. Cattle-baited collection and hand picking techniques were used for sandfly collection in three CL endemic localities, namely, Vavuniya, Anuradhapura and Trincomalee. Female *Ph. (Phl.) salehi* flies from the collections were identified based on morphological and published morphometric characters. This is the first record of the presence of *Ph. (Phl.) salehi* in the country.

Author keywords

Leishmaniasis; *Phlebotomus* (*Phlebotomus*) *salehi*; Sandfly; Sri Lanka; Vector