

OCCURRENCE OF SOLENOPSIS GEMINATA FABR. (FORMICIDAE: HYMENOPTERA) AS A PREDATOR OF THE BROWN PLANT HOPPER

The brown plant hopper *Nilaparvata lugens* Stal (Delphacidae: Homoptera) is recognised as a serious pest of rice in most of the Asian countries. Search for potential natural enemies of this pest has been going on and about eighty species of natural enemies have been recorded from different parts of the world (Sally, 1977).

During February 1979, *Solenopsis geminata* a species of ant was found feeding on the brown plant hopper nymphs in the Research Station Farm. The ants killed and carried the hopper nymphs to their nests in the field bunds. They also cut out circular holes on the leaf sheaths and feed on the hopper eggs which were deposited within. The ants were seen moving about on the plants in search of the oviposition points. The behaviour of the ant was further confirmed in the green house.

Only two species of ants, viz., *Tetramorium guineens* (from Formosa) and *Camponotus* sp. (from India) have previously been reported as predators of *N. lugens* (Manjunath et al. 1978). Lefroy (1909) recorded *S. geminata* as feeding on termites while Fletcher (1914) reported that it fed on tender plants. This is the first report of *S. geminata* as a predator of *N. lugens*.

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സംഗ്രഹം

ബ്രൗൺ പേപ്പറുകളുടെ മുട്ടകൾക്കും കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങൾക്കും നാശം വരുത്തുന്ന ഒരിനം ഏറ്റവുംകൂടെ (സൊളനോപ്പ്സിസ് ജെമിനേറ്റാ), ഇന്ത്യയിൽ ഇദം പ്രഥമമായി കേരളത്തിൽ നിന്ന റിപ്പോർട്ട് ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നു.

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