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**ON THE OCCURRENCE OF *COCCINELLA ARCUATA* FABRICIUS  
(COLEOPTERA: COCCINELLIDAE) AS A PREDATOR OF  
RICE THRIPS IN KERALA**

During the year 1976, serious attack of rice thrips, *Baliothripsbiformis* (Bagnall) was reported from several padasekharams in Kuttanad tract, where Punja crop was planted iate. All stages of thrips remain within the long-itudinally twisted leaves lecerate and damage the chlorophyll of the feaves while extracting the crop. Examination of thæ infested fields revealed the presence of large numbers of the predacious beetles, *Coccinella arcuata* F feeding on the nymphs as well as the adults of rice thrips.

About 100 of these beetles could be collected from a square metre area of the infested field. Beetle grubs were also noted on infested plants in rare cases. Mode of catching and feeding on the prey by the beetle is quite interesting. The beetle settles at the basal portion of the folded paddy leaf and with the help of forelegs, it pulls apart the margin of the twisted leaf to either side and catch the thrips when the leaf is opened. Simultaneously the beetle moves forward and the same process is repeated till it reaches the top of the infested leaf and during the process collects all the prey inside the folded leaf. After scouring one leaf it immediately moves on to the next leaf and repeats the same mode of action.

*C. arcuata* F was recorded as a predator of sugarcane aphids in Hawaii (Agee and smezey, 1919) and of *Aphis maidis* in Guam (Swezey, 1940). Abraham *et al.* (1973) reported this beetle as a predator of Brown Plant Hopper, *Nilaparvatha lugens* S. in Kerala. This is the first record of its occurrence as a predator on rice thrips.

സംഗ്രഹം

കഴിഞ്ഞവർഷം കട്ടനാട്ടിൽ പുഞ്ചക്കുഴമ്പി താമസിച്ചിരുകിയ പല പാടശേഖരങ്ങളിൽ വൻതോതിൽ ഇലപ്പേനീന്റെ ആക്രമണമുണ്ടായി. *raia* പാടശേഖര പരിശോധിച്ചപ്പോൾ ധാരാളം ഇരപിടിയൻ വണ്ടുകൾ അഥവാ പരഭക്ഷികൾ (കോക്സിനല്ലാ ആർകഡെറ) റെട്ടനീളത്തിൽ ചുരുങ്ങിയിരുന്ന *flensgjoejACo* മുൻകാലുകളുടെ സഹായത്താൽ തുറന്ന് ഇലപ്പേനീന്റെ വിവിധ ശേഖരിലുള്ള പ്രാണികളെ പിടിച്ചതിന് നശിപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നതായി കണ്ടു. ഒരു ചതുരശ്ര മീറ്റർ വയലിൽനിന്നും നൂറോളം വണ്ടുകളെ ശേഖരിക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞു.

## REFERENCES

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