

INVITED PAPER

MINIREVIEW

## Fifty Years of Entomological Publications in the Revista de Biología Tropical

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Received 29-X-2002. Corrected 06-XI-2002. Accepted 07-XI-2002.

**Abstract:** Over its fifty year history nearly twenty percent of the papers published in the Revista de Biología Tropical have been about insects and arachnids. In the 1950's papers on arthropods of medical importance were dominant, in the 1960's there was a proliferation of papers on bees, and in more recent years the subjects have become increasingly diverse. In terms of nationality of contributing authors, the journal appears to have become increasingly international in later years.

**Key words:** Entomology, Costa Rica, Latin America, insects, arachnids.

The Revista de Biología Tropical has published papers on a wide diversity of tropical organisms, among which are insects and arachnids. Of the approximately 2300 papers published over the last fifty years, about 400, or 17.4%, deal with insects and arachnids (91.5% of these 400 papers are on insects and 8.5% on arachnids). Although there have been fluctuations – only 10% in the 1950's versus 27% in the 1970's – this figure has remained relatively constant throughout the fifty years.

In the early years of the journal the majority of entomological publications dealt with arthropods of medical and veterinary importance (Table 1). During the 1950's ten of the 13 entomological papers were authored or coauthored by Rodrigo Zeledón, who at the time was working in the Hospital de San Juan de Dios as an assistant of Alfonso Trejos, the founding father of the Revista (R. Zeledón, pers. comm.). Many of these papers dealt with the triatomine (Reduviidae) vectors of Chagas' disease, a trend which continued in the 1960's (nine papers on triatomines were published from 1963 to 1967). In later years the journal continued to publish

papers on medically important arthropods: the venomous *Phoneutria* (Ctenidae) and black widow spiders (Theridiidae: *Latrodectus*), ticks and mites, the sand fly vectors (Psychodidae) of leishmaniasis, and the mosquito vectors (Culicidae: *Anopheles*) of malaria. From 1973 to 1997 Mario Vargas authored or coauthored ten papers on Simuliidae, an important group of biting flies. Several of the papers published in the Revista describe parasites and parasitoids of medically important arthropods (Table 1; Table 3, Scelionidae), which could provide a means of lowering the populations of these arthropods. There have also been several papers on the ectoparasitic arthropods of wild birds and mammals (Vives and Zeledón 1957, Zeledón *et al.* 1957, Tonn and Arnold 1963, 1965, Arnold 1968, Camerik *et al.* 1974, Fain *et al.* 1981, Marinkelle and Grose 1981), the vectors of trypanosomes in frogs (Ramos and Urdaneta-Morales 1977), and *Varroa* mites in honey bees (Ramírez and Navarro 1993).

In the 1960's another trend emerges – a proliferation of papers on bees (Table 2). These publications began with Alvaro Wille, who

TABLE 1

*Representative papers on Medical and Veterinary Entomology published in the Revista de Biología Tropical during the first 50 years of the journal*

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Venemous spiders       | Trejos <i>et al.</i> 1971, González <i>et al.</i> 1998   |
| Ticks and mites        | Fain <i>et al.</i> 1981, Vargas 1984, Herrero 1988, Hermans <i>et al.</i> 1994, Calderón and Sanchez 1996, Meléndez <i>et al.</i> 1998, Alvarez <i>et al.</i> 2000   |
| Cockroaches            | Chinchilla <i>et al.</i> 1994  |
| Lice                   | Tonn and Arnold 1965   |
| Triatomine bugs        | Zeledón 1953, 1955, 1956a, 1965, Zeledón and Vargas 1955, Zeledón and Vieto, 1957b, Zeledón and Morua 1963, Cirano and Zeledón 1964, Marinkelle 1965, 1967, 1982, Zeledón and Blanco 1965, Trejos and Hernández 1966, Herrera <i>et al.</i> 1972, Zeledón and Ponce 1972, Jirón and Zeledón 1982 |
| Fleas                  | Barrera 1966   |
| Phlebotomine sandflies | Rosabal and Trejos 1964, 1965, 1966, Herrero <i>et al.</i> 1991, 1993, Sierra <i>et al.</i> 2000   |
| Mosquitos              | Vargas 1956, 1961, 1962, Lichtwardt and Gómez 1993, Maciá <i>et al.</i> 1997, Micieli and García 1997, García and Micieli 2000   |
| Black flies            | Zeledón and Vieto 1957a, Vargas and Travis 1973, Travis <i>et al.</i> 1974, 1979, Vargas <i>et al.</i> 1977, 1980, 1990, Travis and Vargas 1978, Fallas and Vargas 1981, Vargas and Ramirez 1988, Vargas and Vargas 1997   |
| Ceratopogonid flies    | Vargas 1960  |
| Tabanid flies          | Fairchild 1961, Hogue and Fairchild 1974   |
| Human bot fly          | Zeledón 1956b, 1957b   |

TABLE 2

*Representative papers on bees published in the Revista de Biología Tropical during the first 50 years of the journal*

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Colletidae, Andrenidae | Gaglianone 2000, Genaro 2001.  |
| Halictidae             | Wille and Orozco 1969, Wille and Michener 1970, Michener 1977, Michener <i>et al.</i> 1979.  |
| Megachilidae           | Genaro 1997, 2001.   |
| Xylocopinae            | Michener and Eickwort 1966, Da Silva <i>et al.</i> 1999.   |
| Anthophorines          | Raw 1977, 1979, Wille 1985, Genaro 2001.   |
| Bombini                | Ospina <i>et al.</i> 1987, Silva-Matos and Garófalo 2000.  |
| Euglossini             | Moure 1963, 1964, 1967, Dressler 1967, 1978a-b, 1982a-c, Gonzalez and Gaiani 1989, Ospina-Torres 1998.   |
| Meliponini             | Wille 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963a, 1964, 1965a-b, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1976, 1977, 1979b, Sakagami and Camargo 1964, Wille and Chandler 1964, Camargo 1968, Wille and Orozco 1974, Roubik 1980, 1981, Vergara <i>et al.</i> 1986, Marques-Souza <i>et al.</i> 1996, Pedro and Camargo 1997. |

published nine papers on stingless bees (Meliponini) from 1960 to 1968, and later continued publishing on these bees and on bee morphology (1970, 1979a). Wille did his doctoral research with Charles Michener, the world authority on bees at the University of Kansas, and the Revista thus began attracting contributions by other eminent bee specialists, for example Padre Moure and João Camargo from Brazil. The Revista has also published several papers on pollination, including some of the first publications describing 'buzz pollination', whereby the

bee shakes pollen out of tubular anthers (Michener 1962, Wille 1963b). Other papers cover the pollination of pejobaye palm by *Derelomus palmanum* (Curculionidae) (Mora and Solís 1980), of chayote (Cucurbitaceae) by *Partamona cupira* and *Trigona corvina* (Wille *et al.* 1983), of coconut palm by *Trigona silvestriana* (Hedström 1986), of *Xanthosoma* (Araceae) by *Cyclocephala* (Scarabaeidae) (Valerio 1988), of guava (Myrtaceae) by various Apidae (Hedström 1988b), of passion-flower (Passifloraceae) by *Xylocopa* bees (Da Silva *et*

TABLE 3

*Representative papers on specific taxa of arachnids and insects published in the Revista de Biología Tropical during the first 50 years of the journal*

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Scorpiones    | Lourenço and Mendez 1984, Lourenço 1993, 1996, Florez 1996, Montoya and Armas 2002, Armas <i>et al.</i> 2002   |
| Araneae       | Theraphosidae (Valerio 1979, 1980, Herrero and O'Dell 1988), Pholcidae (Huber 1997), Theridiosomatidae (Eberhard 1989), Uloboridae (Lahmann and Eberhard 1979)   |
| Collembola    | Mari Mutt 1978   |
| Ephemeroptera | Bello and Cabrera, 2001  |
| Odonata       | Esquivel 1993, Ramírez 1997, González and Novelo 1998, Ramírez <i>et al.</i> 2000, Hedström and Sahlén 2001  |
| Orthoptera    | Malavasi <i>et al.</i> 1981a-b, Kohlmann 1996  |
| Dermoptera    | Patel and Habib 1978, Briceño and Schuch 1988, Briceño 1997  |
| Blattaria     | Crawford and Cloudsley-Thompson 1970   |
| Psocoptera    | García Aldrete 1978, 1981, 1984, 1997, 1999  |
| Thysanoptera  | Johansen and García Aldrete 1976, Mound <i>et al.</i> 1993, Retana and Mound 1994, Del-Claro and Mound 1996, Retana <i>et al.</i> 1997, Retana 1998a-b, Johansen 1998, Mound 2002  |
| Hemiptera     |  |
| 'Homoptera'   | Auchenorrhyncha (Rojas <i>et al.</i> 2001), Delphacidae (Macaya-Lizano 1997), Fulgoridae (Hogue 1984, Hogue <i>et al.</i> 1989), Cercopidae (Thompson 1997), Cicadidae (Young 1976), Cicadellidae (Godoy and Nielson 1998, Hidalgo-Gato 1999, Nova Coelho 1999, Nova Coelho and Da-Silva 2002), Psylloidea (Blackmer and Hanson 1997, Briceño 1998), Aphidoidea (Peronti and Sousa-Silva 2002), Aleyrodidae (Vásquez <i>et al.</i> 1997) |
| Heteroptera   | Reduviidae-Apiomerinae (Adis 1984), Pentatomidae (Howard 1987, Vivan <i>et al.</i> 2002), Tingidae (Fallas <i>et al.</i> 1993), Lygaeidae (Rodríguez 1998)   |
| Coleoptera    |  |
| Dytiscidae    | Young 1980   |
| Carabidae     | Cicindelinae (Wille and Michener, 1962)  |
| Hydraenidae   | Delgado <i>et al.</i> 1997   |
| Scarabaeidae  | Wille 1973, Wille <i>et al.</i> 1974, Valerio 1988, Hilje 1996, Kohlmann, 1997, 2000, Escobar and Chacón de Ulloa 2000   |
| Cleridae      | Rifkind 1997   |
| Languriidae   | Pakaluk 1988   |
| Cerambycidae  | Gilmour 1960, 1962, Di Iorio 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997a-b, González and Di Iorio 1997   |
| Bruchidae     | Santos <i>et al.</i> 1997  |
| Chrysomelidae | Habib and Vasconcellos-Neto 1979, Savini 1994, Silveira and Dos Anjos 2001, Silveira <i>et al.</i> 2002  |
| Curculionidae | Parnell 1968, Mora and Solís 1980, Eberhard 1983, Diniz and Morais 1996, Anderson and Gómez 1997   |
| Scolytidae    | Wood <i>et al.</i> 1991a-b, 1992, Jordal 1998, Morales <i>et al.</i> 2000  |
| Mecoptera     | Byers 1977   |
| Trichoptera   | Muñoz-Quesada 1999   |
| Lepidoptera   | Morais <i>et al.</i> 1999, Pereira <i>et al.</i> 2001, Sittenfeld <i>et al.</i> 2002   |
| Moths         | Glyptopterygidae (Calvo 1993), Limacodidae (Corrales and Epstein 1997, 2000), Tortricidae (Blanco <i>et al.</i> 2001), Crambidae (Phillips and Solis 1996), Lasiocampidae (Fischer and Patel 1993, 1994), Noctuidae (Rodríguez <i>et al.</i> 2001)   |
| Butterflies   | Young 1971, 1975, Young and Muyschondt 1972, Beutelspacher 1975, Calvo 1998, Monge-Nájera <i>et al.</i> 1998, Hughes <i>et al.</i> 1998, Zanetti <i>et al.</i> 1999, Swanson and Monge-Nájera 2000, Chacón and Nishida 2002  |
| Diptera       | Asilidae (Scarborough 1993), Phoridae (Ramírez 1982, 1984, Wcislo, 1990, Brown 2000), Pipunculidae (Rafael and Menezes 1999), Tephritidae (Hedström 1988a, Mexzón 1997), Ropalomeridae (Soto-Manitui and Lezama 1988), Sepsidae (Briceño 2002, Eberhard 2002), Agromyzidae (Spencer 1983, Acosta and Cave 1994), Sarcophagidae (Downes 1994).  |

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|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Hymenoptera      |  |
| Cynipidae        | Suárez and Blanco 1991   |
| Scelionidae      | Zeledón 1957a, Valerio 1970, 1984, Rabinovich 1971, Torres <i>et al.</i> 1997, Venzon <i>et al.</i> 1999   |
| Agaonidae        | Ramírez 1988, 1991, 1997, Ramírez and Montero 1988, Ramírez and Malavasi 1997  |
| Eulophidae       | González <i>et al.</i> 1996, Hansson and Nishida 2002  |
| Encyrtidae       | Torres <i>et al.</i> 1997, Venzon <i>et al.</i> 1999, Zanoncio <i>et al.</i> 2000.   |
| Eurytomidae      | Pereira <i>et al.</i> 1998   |
| Ichneumonidae    | Gauld and Lafranco 1987  |
| Vespidae         | Nelson 1970, Diniz and Kitayama 1998, Mechi 1999, Camillo 1999, 2001   |
| Leaf-cutter ants | Cordero 1963, Fowler 1977, 1983, Farji <i>et al.</i> 1992, Farji and Sierra 1993, Farji 1993, Gomides <i>et al.</i> 1997, Tonhasca and Lima Bragança 2000  |
| Ants/plants      | Ibarra and Dirzo 1990, Pfannes and Baier 2002  |
| Other ants       | Lattke 1986, 1990, Bustos and Ulloa-Chacón 1997, Fernández and Palacio 1997, Mackay 1998, Estrada and Fernández 1999, Pérez <i>et al.</i> 1999, McGlynn and Kirksey 2000, Sanjuán <i>et al.</i> 2001 |
| Sphecidae        | Post 1981, Genaro 1993, 1995, 1999, Genaro and Alayon 1994, Grajales and Wcislo 1998, Camillo and Brescovit 1999, 2000, Buys 2001, Camillo 2002  |

*al.* 1999), and the insects associated with flowers of weedy plants (Fernández *et al.* 2001).

Although the Revista continued publishing papers on medical entomology and bees after the 1960's, the entomological subjects became increasingly diverse in later years. Indeed, it is impressive how almost every order of insects is included (Table 3). The only major groups of insects that are absent are stick insects (Phasmatodea), mantids (Mantodea), termites (Isoptera), and Neuroptera. In general there are numerous papers on groups of insects that are particularly common in the Neotropics, such as fig wasps (Agaonidae), leaf-cutter ants (Formicidae: Attini), orchid bees, and stingless bees. Most of the papers treat taxonomy, ecology, or behavior, although there are a few on morphology and physiology. There are other entomological papers that cannot be categorized taxonomically, for example papers on soil arthropods (Fraile and Serrafino 1978, Serafino and Fraile 1978, Lieberman and Dock 1982), aquatic insects (Jiménez and Springer 1994, 1996, Arocena 1996, López *et al.* 1997, Cressa 1999a-b), and herbivorous insects (Coley 1987, Dirzo 1987, Marquis 1987).

I have not reviewed citation indexes and thus cannot evaluate which entomological papers published in the Revista have been most frequently cited. I would, however, like to mention just a few papers that seem noteworthy (these of course reflect personal biases and sev-

eral have undoubtedly been overlooked). For example, the Revista published the first known case of an aquatic homopteran, a cercopid found in the bracts of *Heliconia* (Heliconiaceae) (Thompson 1997). There are very few protozoan parasites of plants and thus it is worth noting a couple of papers on a trypanosome that inhabits the latex of Asclepiadaceae and which is transmitted by *Oncopeltus* (Lygaeidae) (Ruíz 1958, Ayala *et al.* 1975). While there are numerous studies of the predators, parasitoids and pathogens associated with lepidopteran larvae, there are very few studies of their gut bacteria (Sittenfeld *et al.* 2002). The phorid flies that parasitize ants have received considerable attention, but there is relatively little information available on those that attack bees (Ramírez 1982, 1984, Wcislo 1990).

The Revista de Biología Tropical has published relatively few papers on crop pests, which is appropriate since there are other journals dedicated almost exclusively to this topic. However a few noteworthy papers relating to biological control of insects have been published in the Revista. José Rutilio Quesada, who did his doctorate research under Paul DeBach (one of the major figures in the field) at the University of California, was one of the first to do research in Latin America demonstrating that insecticides often devastate the populations of natural enemies of insect pests, thereby provoking a resurgence in the pest populations (Quezada *et al.*

TABLE 4  
*Entomological monographs published by the Revista de Biología Tropical*

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Coleoptera                                 |                          |
| Chrysomelidae: Eumolpinae                  | Flowers 1996             |
| Chrysomelidae: Hispini: <i>Cephaloleia</i> | Staines 1996             |
| Diptera                                    |                          |
| Psychodidae (excluding Phlebotominae)      | Quate 1996               |
| Hymenoptera                                |                          |
| Ichneumonidae: Pimplinae                   | Gauld <i>et al.</i> 1998 |
| Sphecidae                                  | Menke and Fernández 1996 |
| Apidae: Meliponini (nests)                 | Wille and Michener 1973  |

1973). It has occasionally been noted that the dust from roads can interfere with parasitoid activity, but Wille and Fuentes (1975) reported a unique resurgence of pests following the eruption of Volcan Irazú in Costa Rica. Naturally occurring parasitoids that help control pests have been reported from the leafminer, *Liriomyza* (Agromyzidae), which occurs in various crops (Acosta and Cave 1994), and from stink bugs (Pentatomidae) in soybean (Venzon 1999) and *Eucalyptus* plantations (Zanuncio *et al.* 2000). The sugarcane borer (Pyralidae: *Diatraea*) is normally controlled through mass-rearing and periodic liberation of tachinid and braconid parasitoids. The competition between these parasitoids was studied by Weir and Sagarzazu (1998).

I have not analyzed the geographic distribution of the research or the nationality of the authors contributing entomological papers to the Revista. However, it is obvious that the overwhelming majority of the papers are from research carried out in Latin America (which is appropriate), and a cursory inspection of the nationality of the authors suggests that the journal has become more international in the last 25 years. At least some of the foreign contributors were probably motivated to publish in the journal through their contacts with Costa Rican entomologists (this idea could be tested by examining the nationality of coauthored papers).

Special mention should be made of the the entomological monographs (four supplements and two special publications) published by the Revista (Table 4). These are primarily taxonom-

ic in nature (several were done in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad) and provide a valuable resource in a region where the mere identification of insects presents a major obstacle to entomological research. Indeed, given that the majority of neotropical insects are undescribed, numerous large volumes will be required to remedy this situation.

In Latin America relatively few countries (Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Chile) publish journals dedicated to entomology. Thus the Revista de Biología Tropical, along with other general biological journals published in the region, provides a valuable, bilingual site for publishing the results of entomological research and for consulting these results. May the next fifty years be as entomologically prosperous as the last fifty years.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Rodrigo Zeledón for reviewing an earlier version of this manuscript.

#### RESUMEN

A través de su historia de cincuenta años, casi veinte por ciento de los artículos publicados en la Revista de Biología Tropical trataron de insectos y arácnidos. En los años cincuenta dominaron los artículos sobre artrópodos de importancia médica, en los años sesenta hubo una proliferación de artículos sobre abejas, y en los últimos años los temas incluidos se hicieron más diversos. En términos de la nacionalidad

de los autores contribuyentes, parece que la revista se ha vuelto más internacional en los últimos años.

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