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MOLECULAR DIAGNOSIS OF MALE-KILLING *SPIROPLASMA* INFECTION IN SOME SPECIES OF BUTTERFLIES IN INDIA

KUNAL ANKOLA*, KAVYA KRISHNA, PRIYANKA SWAMY and H. P. PUTTARAJU

Division of Biological Sciences, School of Natural Science, Bangalore University, Bengaluru (Karnataka)

ABSTRACT : Reproductive anomalies which diminish males and increase the females in a given populations of certain insect species are predominantly caused by some endosymbiotic microorganisms. Among such microorganisms, *Spiroplasma* is the one which is exclusively cause male-killing in their insect host. The present paper provides the information about the infection status of male-killing *Spiroplasma* in some species of butterflies in India. Out of seven species of butterflies belonging to three different families used for the study, two *i.e. Euploea core* and *D.genutia* are found to be infected with *Spiroplasma*. Both these butterflies lays individual eggs on their host plants and hence the basic strategy of the male-killing phenotype caused by *Spiroplasma i.e.* sibling cannibalism is questionable in these two species. The detection of male-killing *Spiroplasma* in Euploea core and *D.genutia* is a novel finding to our knowledge.

Key words : *Euploea core, Danaus genutia, Spiroplasma, Male-killing.*