

Occurrence of *Haemaphysalis* ticks in leopard (*Panthera pardus*) at Nagpur

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A four-year-old male leopard (*Panthera pardus*) belonging to Forest Department, Tah-Wadsa, District Chandrapur (M.S.), was ailing and presented for treatment at Nagpur Veterinary College Hospital, Nagpur. Tick samples were collected, processed and identified as *Haemaphysalis* sp. based on its morphological characters, which seems to be first report on the incidence of *Haemaphysalis* ticks in leopard from Nagpur region.

Tick parasitism poses a direct threat to the health causing unthriftiness, restlessness and anaemia that predispose the animal to loss of condition, in addition to transmission of various pathogens and blood protozoan, in particular. These cause serious health hazards to wild animals. Information is lacking pertaining to the prevalence of ticks in wild animals from Maharashtra. Hence, the present communication deals with the occurrence of *Haemaphysalis* ticks in leopard (*Panthera pardus*) from Nagpur region.

Tick samples collected from skin of ear, neck and paw and were transported to the laboratory for identification. Identification was performed based on morphological characters described by Sen and Fletcher (1962).

Based on examination, the leopard was found to be infested with *Haemaphysalis* sp., which is in consonance with the findings of Mudaliar *et al.* (1950), who also witnessed *Haemaphysalis* tick infestation from wild cat (*Felis catus*) at Madras Veterinary College, Madras which was considered to be a vector for *Babesia* sp. infection. Horak *et al.* (1987) also collected *Haemaphysalis* ticks from 2 leopards belonging to Kruger National Park, South Africa. Similarly, Buoro *et al.* (1994) evidenced *Haemaphysalis* tick infestation in ailing lioness (*Panthera leo*), which was suffering from

ehrlichiosis. Horak *et al.* (2000) recorded three species of *Haemaphysalis*, viz. *H. leachi*, *H. spinulosa* and *H. zumpti* from wild carnivores in South Africa.

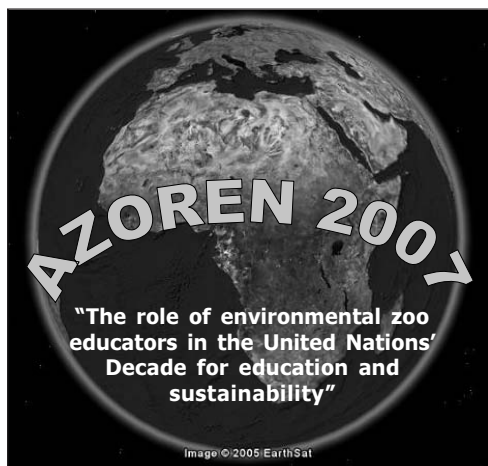
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