

PAC6499
Trial
copy**REPORT: V. Behan-Pelletier File: PUP #3182**

Between March 11-26, 1996 I sampled soil and litter habitats for oribatid mites (Acari: Oribatida) from a variety of locations on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, including the following Provincial Parks:

Trial Island Ecological Reserve:

13 samples of ca. 0.5m², from the following habitats on 14 March:

sifted decaying driftwood;	litter & clumps of <i>Elymus mollis</i> ;
grass, moss & mixed plants;	litter under <i>Rosa nutkana</i> ;
<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i> litter;	lichen on rocks;
<i>Polygonum</i> litter;	<i>Cammasia</i> , <i>Plantago</i> , moss & grass;
moss & <i>Polypodium</i> litter;	snowberry & <i>Cladonia</i> on rocks;
litter under fern moss & grass;	

MacMillan Provincial Park:

14 samples of ca. 0.5m², from the following habitats on 15 March:

series of soil and litter samples from forest floor, associated with western red cedar, maple, and western hemlock.

Carmanah Provincial Park:

9 samples of ca. 0.5m², from the following habitats on 23 March:

series of soil and litter samples from forest floor, associated with Sitka spruce, cedar, and western hemlock.

I did not have the opportunity within the short time I spent on Vancouver Island to collect in Robson Bight Ecological Reserve or Stratcona Provincial Park.

Mites were extracted from the 36 samples collected during the 11-26 March period, in extractors setup at Cowichan Lake Experimental Station. Over 5000 mites were extracted from these samples, and the Oribatida have been roughly sorted to family. The focus of my on-going research, Ceratozetoidea, have been sorted to species.

There are at least 5 new species in two ceratozetoid families: Ceratozetidae and Zetomimidae. These species were already known from soil and litter samples taken in the past on Vancouver Island, and from research by Neville Winchester (University of Victoria) on canopy arthropods in the Carmanah. However, the samples taken during March 1996 add important new distribution records, and provide immature stages for species where adult specimens only were available previously.

Research to describe these species of Ceratozetoidea is ongoing, and should be partially completed by the end of 1998.

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(Nov 26/01)
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