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Estimation of spatial diversity of spider species among mustard crop through pitfall trap method

Muhammad Arshad Rana[1*], Munaza Shabnam[2], Naureen Rana[3], Tauseef Ullah[4], Luqman Khan[4], Sobia Kanwal[3], Marriam Batool[4], Shamsa Altaf[4]

[1]*Department of Zoology, Govt. Postgraduate College Okara, Pakistan*

[2]*Department of Biology, Govt. Postgraduate College (W), Sahiwal, Pakistan*

[3]*Department of Zoology, Wildlife and Fisheries, UAF, Pakistan*

[4]*Department of Zoology, Govt. College University Faisalabad, Pakistan*

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to estimate the spatial diversity of spider species among mustard crop at Okara district, Punjab, Pakistan. Sampling spiders was made on fortnight basis through pitfall traps. Equal number of traps filled with mixture solution of alcohol and glycerin (70:30%) along with few drops of kerosene oil were placed in three rows e.g. along the boundary, middle of the field and centre of the field. After 5 days interval sample traps collected and spider specimen were washed with distilled water and permanently stored in labeled glass vials. All the spider specimens were identified according to the taxonomic material and internet source. Overall maximum spatial distribution of spider species was documented in middle transect than boundary and centre of the mustard crop. Spatial diversity was estimated during the months of February, March and April in 2015, due to rise of temperature, decrease of humidity and availability of prey. Conclusively, spider species have some correlation with temperature and suitable local conditions. More over, these species are functionally significant and play a key role in regulating decomposer population.

***Corresponding Author:** Muhammad Arshad Rana ✉ marshadrana719@gmail.com

Introduction

Fodder crops are particularly refer to food for animals or live-stock. They comprise of straw, hay, pelleted feed, silage, oils, legumes and sprouted grains. Currently in Pakistan, various fodder crops are cultivated over 15 million hectares with 52 million ton annual fodder production (Anonymous, 2013). However, suitable rainfall and temperature range can enhance the present outcomes (Hussain *et al.*, 2010). Because, in many parts of Pakistan, there is abrupt shortage of fodder for live-stock, and also the available fodder is of poor quality. The farmers are facing a lot of problems to get maximum forage yield to meet the feed requirements. Improved fodder varieties along with control of damage by invading insect pest can overcome the situation. In this context, berseem provides valuable supplemental food to live-stock community e.g. nitrogen, energy, minerals and vitamins. Consequently, it increase the availability of nutrients for maintenance and ideal production status. (Douglas *et al.*, 2000).

However, fodder crops provide more than 80% feeding to live-stock from October to April (Younas and Yaqoob, 2005). But, its production is low due to serious insect damage. Mustard crop provides valuable supplemental food to live-stock community e.g. nitrogen, energy, minerals and vitamins.Consequently, it increase the availability of nutrients for maintenance and ideal production status. (Douglas *et al.*, 2000).

To enhance the yield, control of insect pests is a major issue and use of spiders to control these insect pests is of profound importance. Spiders have globally more than 40,000 identified species (Platnick, 2012). They have remarkable abundance and are highly diversified terrestrial predator especially in agro-ecosystems (Wise, 1993). They can play a pivotal role in keeping insect and pest populations in check and balance and they are also serve as food for birds, snakes, fish and other animals. They eat insects and bugs which destroy different crops and consequently safe guard the agro-ecosystems. By habitat management. We can conserve the diversity of natural enemies (including spiders) of arthropod pest (Douglas *et al.*, 2000).

Spider's abundance and diversity vary in different agro-ecosystems and they have temporo-spatial distribution in all agricultural lands to effectively destruct the insect pest population (Seyfulina, 2003; Rana *et al.*, 2016). Their breeding success is directly related to amount of precipitation which act as potential factors to affect the abundance and species richness (Thomas *et al.*, 2014). They are most important arthropods for economic point of view playing role as biological control agent and their adaptation towards different habitats (Kazim *et al.*, 2014).

Keeping in view the importance of spider densities and role of mustard crop in live-stock sector, the present study was designed to estimate the spatial diversity of spider species among mustard crop through pitfall method at Okara district, Punjab, Pakistan.

Materials and methods

Study area

The present study was designed to estimate the spatial diversity of ground dwelling spider species among mustard crop at Okara district. Because information about their distribution in any agro-ecosystem was pre-requisite to formulate any strategy to use them for bio-control purposes. Presently, these informations were recorded from Okara district. Mustard crop was cultivated in one acre rectangular field in village 36-/2L located at Okara district, Punjab, Pakistan. The sampling field was surrounded by wheat fields from two sides, where as on third side, it was surrounded by a Berseem and Mustard field.

Okara district

Okara district is situated in Punjab province at 30, 8081 (304829.160"N) latitude and 73, 4458 (732644.880"E) longitude. This district is bounded on the East by Kasur district, Sahiwal and Pakpattan

districts on the West, Sheikhupura and Faisalabad districts on the North and Bahawalnagar district on the South. The Indian border also lies on the South-Eastern side of the district. Okara district has a total area of 4,377 square kilometres and comprises of three tehsils i.e. Okara, Depalpur and Renala Khurd.

Sampling design and techniques

The sampling was carried out from October, 2014 through April, 2015 to collect the ground dwelling spider fauna in mustard crop.Total thirty traps were set in the field for five successive days. The two successive traps were at equal distance from each other and the distance from outer boundary of the field was 5m. Pitfall traps were 12cm long glass jars with 6cm (diameter) wide mouths. Each trap contained 150 ml of 70% ethyl alcohol and a small amount of kerosene oil which served as preservative and killing agent.Ten pitfall traps were laid along each transect line i.e. boundary, middle and centre at an equal interval from each other.

Collection of data

For mustard crop, ideal field measuring 7200 sq. ft. were selected to observe the spatial distribution of ground dwelling spider species through pitfall trap method. However, trapping was made by three layers inside the field radius wise to observe the infestation along the entire field. Data was collected fortnightly and collected specimens were brought into the Pest Control Laboratory, Departmentof Zoology, Wildlife and Fisheries, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. All the specimens were identified according to the reference material. The field of mustard was sampled after 5 days intervals right from the pre-harvest stage. More over, minimum and maximum temperature and humidity of area was also recorded.

Preservation

All traps were taken to Pest Control Laboratory, Department of Zoology, Wildlife and Fisheries, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. Where the specimens were washed with xylene and preserved in 95% ethanol containing few drops of glycerin. Specimens were preserved separately in small glass vials indicating with trap number and the date of capture.

Identification

The collected samples were identified with the aid of naked eye, magnifying glass and under the microscope. All the specimens were identified up to species level according to the taxonomic and reference material (Tikader and Malhotra (1982), Tikader and Biswas (1981), Barrion and Litsinger (1995), Zhu *et al.* (2003), Platnick (2012), other relevant literature and internet source.

Statistical analysis

Thereafter, all the identified specimens were arranged in table form according to their morphological characters e.g. family, genus. To determine the various aspects of diversity, Shannon Diversity Index was used (Magurran, 1988). Analysis of Variance was made to compare the population means between three transects, i.e. Boundary, middle and centre of berseem crop. The richness, diversity and evenness indices were computed by using the Programme SPDIVERS.BAS.

Results

Spatial diversity of spider species

Data presented in Table 1, is pertaining the month wise comparison of diversity indices among species at three trasects i.e. boundary, middle and centre of the berseem crop. During the month of November maximum diversity (H) at boundary recorded was 2.9125, eveness 0.9892, and dominance was 0.0108. When compared with middle, maximum diversity was 2.5650, eveness 1.0000, and dominance 0.000 and at centre, no diversity was found. During the month of December maximum diversity (H") at boundary recorded was 1.6094, eveness 1.0000 and dominance was 0.0000 when compared with middle, maximum diversity was 1.6094, eveness 1.0000, and dominance 0.000. and at centre, no diversity was found.During the month of January maximum diversity (H") at boundary recorded was 1.0986, eveness 1.0000 and

dominance was 0.0000 when compared with middle, maximum diversity was 0.6932, eveness 1.0000, and dominance 0.000 and at centre, no diversity was found . During the month of February maximum diversity (H") at boundary recorded was 3.3285, eveness 0.9885 and dominance was 0.0115 when compared with middle, maximum diversity was 3.4858, eveness 0.9804, and dominance 0.0196 and at centre, maximum diversity 2.3979, eveness 1.0000 and dominance 0.0000.

Table 1. Number of species (S), total number of samples (N), Shannon diversity index, Lambda value and Evenness for transect-wise monthly data of Mustard crop for different species.

Site	Month	S	N	H' Shannon	Lambda	Evenness	Dominance
Boundary	November	19	21	2.9125	0.0567	0.9892	0.0108
	December	5	5	1.6094	0.2000	1.0000	0.000
	January	3	3	1.0986	0.3333	1.0000	0.000
	February	29	33	3.3285	0.0377	0.9885	0.0115
	March	36	50	3.5029	0.0328	0.9775	0.0225
	April	37	53	3.5158	0.0331	0.9737	0.0263
Middle	November	13	13	2.5650	0.0769	1.0000	0.000
	December	5	5	1.6094	0.2000	1.0000	0.000
	January	2	2	0.6932	0.5000	1.0000	0.000
	February	35	46	3.4858	0.0331	0.9804	0.0196
	March	39	63	3.5367	0.0335	0.9654	0.0346
	April	39	75	3.5653	0.0311	0.9732	0.0268
Center	November	1	1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	December	1	1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	January	1	1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	February	11	11	2.3979	0.0909	1.0000	0.000
	March	13	16	2.5127	0.0859	0.9796	0.0204
	April	19	22	2.9020	0.0579	0.9856	0.0144

Where S = Number of species.

During the month of March maximum diversity (H") at boundary recorded was 3.5029, eveness 0.9775 and dominance was 0.0225 when compared with middle, maximum diversity was 3.5367, eveness 0.9654, and dominance 0.0346 and at centre, maximum diversity 2.527, eveness 0.9796 and dominance 0.0204.During the month of April, maximum diversity (H") at boundary recorded was 3.5158, eveness 0.9737 and dominance was 0.0263 when compared with middle, maximum diversity was 3.5653, eveness 0.9732, and dominance 0.0268 and at centre, maximum diversity 2.9020, eveness 0.9856 and dominance 0.0144.Overall maximum diversity (H") recorded in the month of April at the middle was 3.5653, eveness 0.9732 and dominance was 0.0268 respectively, when compared with boundary and centre of the mustard crop.

Comparison of diversity indices

Data presented in Table 2, is pertaining the month wise comparison of diversity indices among species from mustard crop. Overall species wise maximum diversity (H") recorded in mustard crop during the month of November was 3.2631, evenness 0.9792 and dominance 0.0207 respectively. During the month of December maximum diversity 2.3979, evenness 1.0000 and dominance 0.0000 was recorded. During the month of January maximum diversity 1.7918, evenness 1.0000 and dominance 0.0000 was recorded. During the month of February maximum

diversity 3.6101, evenness 0.9598 and dominance 0.0402 was recorded. During the month of March maximum diversity 3.6241, evenness 0.9577 and dominance 0.0423 was recorded. During the month of April maximum diversity 3.6485, evenness 0.9641 and dominance 0.0359 was recorded. Maximum diversity 3.6485, and evenness 0.9641 was recorded during the month of April while dominance 0.0423 were recoded during the month of March respectively.

Table 2. Number of species(S), total number of samples(N), Shannon diversity index, Lambda value, Evenness and dominance for transect-wise monthly record of mustard crop for different species.

Month	S	N	H Shannon	Lambda	Evenness	Dominance
November-14	28	35	3.2631	0.0416	0.9793	0.0207
December-14	11	11	2.3979	0.0909	1.000	0.000
January-15	6	6	1.7918	0.1667	1.000	0.000
February-15	43	90	3.6101	0.0311	0.9598	0.0402
March-15	44	129	3.6241	0.0314	0.9577	0.0423
April-15	44	150	3.6485	0.0294	0.9641	0.0359

Effects of temperature and humidity

Temperature of the country is increasing day by day due to global warming. Consequently, the change in temperature also alter the humidity of the environment. Due to change of temperature and humidity, imbalanece the relationship between organism and the environment. This issue was observed on scientific basis among ground dwelling spiders to record the effect of ecological changes. Relative abundance recorded from mustard crop was compred with regard to temperature and humidity in each month (on average). During present study, effects of temperature and humidity on relative abundance were much convincing. With the increase in temperature, increase in population and breeding success was recorded. While, with the increase in humidity reduction in breeding out put and population size was observed (Fig. 1). Some species also showed preference towards micro-habitat while mojority showed generalist behavior. It was also estimated that start of breeding season, enhancment in growth and acceleration in maturity were proportional to temperature and humidity. As temperature reached above 25°C, start in breeding occur and with decrease in temperature up to the same situation and increase in humidity, it comes to the end. From these findings, it is quite obvious that temperature and humidity are limiting factors in the life histories of spiders' community. Maximum relative abundance was recorded during start of March and April. However, ratio of relative abundance was equal in start of February and the end of April. During December and January lowest relative abundance of spider fauna was recorded due to decrease in temperature and humidity. Relative abundance of common species was accelerating among both the mustard crop at Okara district whereas, numeral frequency of rare species was exceeding at some extent, but they make bulk up to 03% only. As far as frequency of common families and species is concerned, they make immensity up to 75% randomly of total catch among both mustard crop. Generally, frequency of relative abundance was recorded highest from February to August, while, lowest was recorded in December and January due to fluctuation in temperature and humidity (Fig. 1).

Analysis of variance

Data represented in Table 3, pertaining to Analysis of variance for transect-wise abundance of different species of spiders for mustard crop.The mean number of spider's population month wise and transect wise were statistically highly significant ($P<0.01$). The mean number of spider's population during the month of January (2.33±0.71), February (26.33±6.73), March (42.33±9.22) and April (60.83±11.79) were statistically significan ($P<0.05$), where as in November (11.50±3.12), December (4.17±0.91) and January (2.33±0.71) were statistically nonsignificant ($P>0.05$) in mustard crop. Transect-

wise mean number of spider's population in boundary (27.50±8.82) and centre (8.67±3.71), and middle (34.00±12.87) and centre (8.67±3.71) were statistically significant (P<0.05), while in boundary (27.50±8.82) and middle (34.00±12.87) were statistically non significant (P>0.05) in mustard crop. Overall mean number of spider's population in mustard crop (23.39±5.66) was statistically non significant (P>0.05).

Table 3. Analysis of variance table for transect-wise abundance of different species for mustard crop.

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F-value
Months	5	16291.6	3258.32	21.15**
Crop	1	51.4	51.36	0.33NS
Transect	2	4483.5	2241.75	14.55**
Crop x Transect	2	25.4	12.69	0.08NS
Error	25	3850.9	154.04	
Total	35	24702.8		

NS = Non-significant (P>0.05); * = Significant (P<0.05); ** = Highly significant (P<0.01).

Continued. Month wise mean ± SE.

Month	Mean ± SE	
November-14	11.50±3.12	D
December-14	4.17±0.91	D
January-15	2.33±0.71	D
February-15	26.33±6.73	C
March-15	42.33±9.22	B
April-15	60.83±11.79	A

Means sharing similar letters are statistically non-significant (P>0.05).

Continued. Crops x Transect interaction mean ± SE.

Transect	Mustard Crop	
	Mean ± SE	
Boundary	27.50	± 8.82
Middle	34.00	± 12.87
Center	8.67	± 3.71
Mean	23.39	± 5.66A

Means sharing similar letter in a row or in a column are statistically non-significant (P>0.05).

Discussion

Ecological distribution

Due to global warming, temperature and humidity are alarming in Pakistan (Govt. of Pakistan, 2010) resulting imbalancement in ecological conditions (Schmidt *et al.*, 2005). According to Rittschof (2012); Agnarsson (2003); Herberstein and Fleisch (2003); Rana *et al.* (2016), temperature is limting factor in the life history of spiders' community. For instance, in temperate region, decline in temperature result as end of the reproductive season (Agnarsson, 2003; Herberstein and Fleisch, 2003). According to these

researchers, spiders also alter their web-site with regard to temperature and during *in-situ* conditions; low temperature affects egg development and the female's ability to oviposit. As temperature increases, start in breeding occur and with decrease in temperature up to the same situation and increase in humidity, it comes to the end (Rittschof, 2012; Rana *et al.* 2016). During present study, it was noted that species diversity, relative abundance, evenness, and richness increased with least use of pesticides. Mushtaq *et al.* (2003 & 2005); Schmidt *et al.* (2008) reported that sustainable agricultural practices can enhance spider population as well as species diversity, relative abundance and richness.

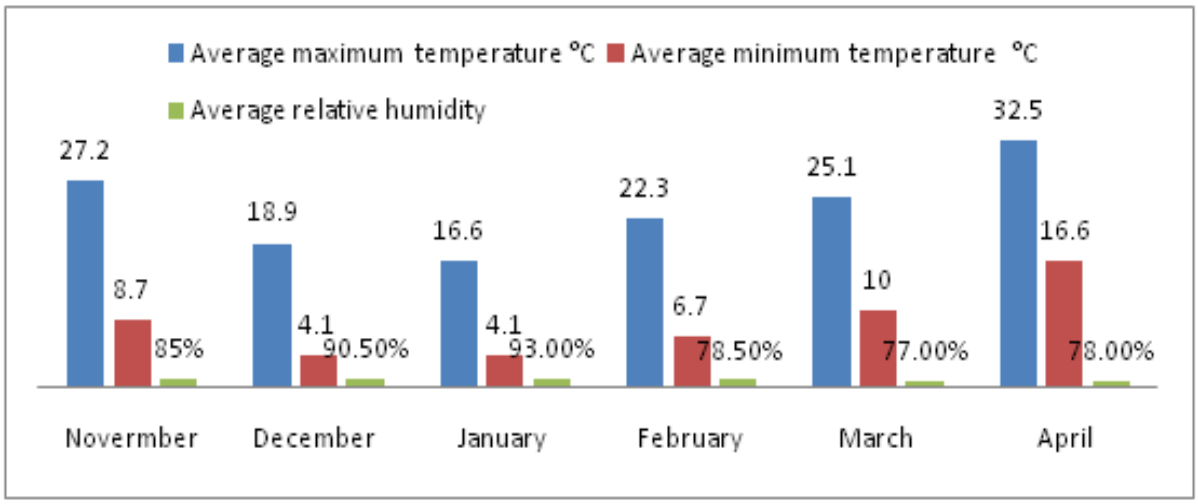

Fig. 1. Month wise temperature and humidity in mustard crop at Okara district.

The coexistence of more species during February, March and April is due to the availability of exces insect prey, redtruced micro-climatic changes and increased structural forms of plants during these months (Rana *et al.*, 2016). In cold situation is reverse to above said and due to this number of specimen and diversity of species decreases. Spiders are most prominent insectivores in terrestrial ecosystem and shows diversity of life style and foraging behavior. They are important predator fauna of agricultural lands because they are capable of propogating their population rapidly (Harwood *et al.*, 2001). The findings of present study were according to views of these researches in Pakistan and other geographic regions of the world. These findings have also confirmed our expectation about impact of temperature and humidity.

Seasonal variations

Evidences regarding sesaonal variations of spider population was underlined by considering the findings of previous researchers because field type, management pattern, agronomic operations, soil culture and floral structures significantly affect spider's population (Thomas and Waage, 1996; Liljesthrom *et al.*, 2002; Ahmad *et al.*, 2005). It was also estimated that start of breeding season, enhancment in growth and acceleration in maturity were proportional to temperature and humidity.

As temperature reached above 25°C, start in breeding occur and with decrease in temperature up to the same situation and increase in humidity, it comes to the end (Rana *et al.*, 2016). From these findings, it is quite obvious that temperature and humidity have the correlation with spiders' population.

These findings are also in same context as already reported in Pakistan (Ghafoor, 2002; Ghaffar *et al.*, 2011; Rana *et al.*, 2016). Findings of present study were in accordance with these researchers. It was also observed that seasonal distribution trend was affected by temperature, humidity, migration as well as prey availability.

Conclusion

Conclusively, spiders have some correlation with suitable local conditions or habitat. However, it was observed during the present study that spider's population were also effected by increase or decrease in temperature, humidity and prey availability. So, there is necessity of future research for the proper use of spider fauna as biological control agent in IPM programmes.

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