

AN OVER VIEW ON ANTARCTIC LIFE SCIENCE RESEARCHES AT SCHIRMARCHER OASIS BY INDIA

Ashis Kumar Hazra

Zoological survey of India, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Introduction: Zoological Survey of India started this project since 1989-90 and made the following achievements on six major groups viz. Protozoa, Tardigrada, Rotifera, Nematoda, Acarina & Collembola.

Method: Collections of different groups of moss inhabiting invertebrate fauna by using standard method.

Results: Protozoa- The dominant group comprised of 17 species. Besides taxonomic study, the dominance & diversity of 5 terrestrial species (Protozoa: *Rhizopora*) from 8 lakes were analyzed. Tardigrada- during the course of study only 2 species have been encountered, namely *Hipsibius chilensis* (Plate) & *Macrobiotus polaris* (Murray). Rotifera- Starting from IXth to XXIIInd Indian expeditions only species, *Philodina gregerina* has been encountered. Nematodea- The well documented second dominant group of Invertebrate fauna of this Oasis. In the IX expedition five genera of nematodes were first reported from this area.

Discussion: The study revealed that a significant correlation exists between soil nematodes population & soil factors altogether 11 genera were reported. Fifteen species of Acarina have been recorded of which 5 species were new to science. Two species of Collembola comprising of two genera (*Cryptopygus* & *Calx*) were recorded for the first time from Schirmacher Oasis. Genus *Calx* reported for the first time from Antarctic continent. *Forcipemyia* sp (Ceratopogonidea: *Forcipemyiini*) has been recorded for the first time during XIXth expedition. Details have been discussed in the present article.