

Incidence of Helminthic infection in Axis Deer

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Abstract

The parasitic investigation was carried out in 200 Axis deer of scrub forest of Borgaon Manju in Western Vidarbha region of Maharashtra and revealed the presence of *Strogylides sp.*, *Strogyle sp.*, *Trichostrongylus sp.*, *Trichuris sp.*, *Oesophagosomum sp.* Total 89.05% animal were positive for parasites representing *Strogylodes*(31.50%), *Strogyles sp*(20.00%), *Haemonchus sp.*(13.80%), *Trichostrongylus*(11.50%), *Trichuris*(8.50%), and *Bunostomum sp.*(4.00%). The incidence was highest in winter season followed by rainy season.

Keywords: Helminths, Axis Deer, Parasitic investigation, Wildlife.

Parasitic burden in wildlife is a common problem. Very few reports are available regarding the incidence of different parasites in Axis deer. However, knowledge regarding prevalence of helminth parasites of Wildlife in Maharashtra is limited. Hence, study was undertaken to find out the incidence of helminth found in free range deer in the scrub forest of Borgaon Manju in Western Vidarbha region.

Materials and Methods

The faecal samples of two hundred deer (*Axis axis*) of forest were collected in different seasons viz., Summer (March to May), Rainy (June to Sept.) and Winter (Oct. to Feb.) during the year 2002-03. The faecal samples were examined microscopically by direct smear technique for the presence of helminth parasites.

Results and Discussion

Examination of two hundred faecal samples of deer collected from forest revealed the presence of *Strongyloides sp.*, *Strongyles sp.*, *Trichostrongylus sp.*, *Trichuris sp.*, *Oesophagostomum sp.*, *Haemonchus sp.* and *Bunostomum sp.*

Out of two hundred samples examined 178 (89.00%) were found positive for helminth parasites. A similar findings were recorded by Narayan Bhat *et al.* (1998) who reported that the egg counts were generally high in free living animals than the animals in captivity.

The incidence of helminth parasites were recorded as *Strongyloides sp.* (31.50%) *Strongyle spp.* (20.00%), *Haemonchus spp.*(13.80%), *Trichostrongylus sp.* (11.50%), *Trichuris sp.* (8.50%) and *Bunostomum sp.* (4.00%).

These findings corroborates with the observations of Kafil Hussain *et al.* (2002) and Gaur *et al.* (1979), who encountered similar helminth species. From results of study, variations have been observed in the prevalence of helminthic infection in three different seasons. It is noted that the incidence of helminth parasites in Axis deer touched its peak during winter followed by rainy season. This can be attributed to the fact that after rains during winter (Oct., Nov. and Dec), the atmosphere is conducive for increased pasture contamination and development of infective larvae and also increased infestation of parasites. In rainy season, higher temperature and humidity provides favourable condition for propagation of parasites resulting higher parasitic burden among deer population.

These findings corroborates well with the observations made by Kafil Hussain *et al.* (2002) who recorded higher incidence of helminthic infection in winter and rainy season in Axis deer.

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