PARASITO2025
29º CONGRESSO BRASILEIRO DE PARASITOLOGIA

PARASITOLOGICAL SURVEILLANCE IN WHITE-FACED SPIDER MONKEYS (*ATELES MARGINATUS*) IN THE MUNICIPAL NATURAL PARK OF THE MATO GROSSO FOREST

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Abstract

Non-human primates (NHPs) inhabiting natural environments can serve as hosts for various enteroparasites with zoonotic potential, posing a significant risk to both wildlife and human health. These parasites can be transmitted between animals and humans, causing gastrointestinal infections, nutritional disorders, and even more severe diseases, especially in vulnerable populations.

Infection in these animals by protozoa and helminths may occur through the ingestion of contaminated water, the consumption of small arthropods such as cockroaches and crickets, or the accidental ingestion of soil and fruits contaminated with parasite eggs, cysts, or larvae.

In this study, fecal samples from white-faced spider monkeys (*Ateles marginatus*) were analyzed in the Municipal Natural Forest Park (PNMF) in Sinop, Mato Grosso. A total of 22 fecal samples were collected and processed using the coproparasitological techniques of spontaneous sedimentation (Hoffman) and flotation (Sheather). The results indicated that ten samples tested positive and twelve negative for intestinal parasites.

The analysis of the 10 positive fecal samples revealed the presence of intestinal protozoa and helminths with the following absolute and relative frequencies: *Blastocystis sp.* (27.2%), *Endolimax nana* (4.5%), and *Entamoeba sp.* (4.5%). Among the helminths, hookworms (13.6%) and *Toxocara sp.* (9.09%) were identified.

Additionally, polyparasitism was observed, with some samples containing more than one parasite species simultaneously. These findings reinforce the importance of parasitological surveillance in wildlife for the early detection of zoonotic pathogens. The implementation of preventive measures, combined with interdisciplinary research, contributes to biodiversity conservation and the reduction of public health threats.

Keywords: Parasitology, Zoonoses, Atelidae