FIRST RECORD OF *Panstrongylus megistus* (BURMEISTER, 1835) (HEMIPTERA, REDUVIIDAE, TRIATOMINAE) ON ILHA GRANDE, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

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Chagas disease is a parasitic infection caused by the parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*, transmitted by insects such as *Panstrongylus megistus*, which was the first triatomine recognized as a vector of the disease. This study investigated the presence of *P. megistus* in Ilha Grande, Rio de Janeiro state. The insect was collected, identified, and analyzed to determine the *T. cruzi* infection and their blood meal source. The presence of *P. megistus* was morphologically confirmed. The genetic analysis showed *Gallus gallus* as the blood meal source, but it was negative for *T. cruzi* infection. The findings expand the known distribution of *P. megistus* and highlight the need for the continued monitoring of this Chagas disease vector. Herein, we present the first record of *P. megistus* in the region, and due to the potential of *T. cruzi* transmission in the area, the installation of physical barriers to reduce this risk is recommended.

Keywords: Chagas disease. kissing bugs. *Trypanosoma cruzi*.