COPROPARASITOLOGICAL EXAMINATION IN ARMADILLOS FROM THE PANTANAL AND CERRADO OF MATO GROSSO DO SUL.

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Abstract

Little is known about the prevalence, diversity, and distribution of endoparasites in armadillos in Brazil, as well as the risk and impact on public and animal health. The role of wild animals as sources and amplifiers of emerging pathogens in humans and domestic animals has received considerable attention in recent years. The increase in anthropogenic activities and urban expansion in areas of habitat for wild animals contributes to the spread of parasites. Therefore, investigating the parasitic fauna of zoonotic importance in wild animals is essential for health management and surveillance. This study, conducted in partnership with the Institute for the Conservation of Wild Animals (ICAS), analyzed fecal samples from armadillos in the Pantanal and Cerrado regions of Mato Grosso do Sul. A total of 59 fecal samples were analyzed: 51 from the six-banded armadillo (Euphractus sexcinctus), 2 from the giant armadillo (Priodontes maximus), 3 from the southern naked-tailed armadillo (Cabassous squamicaudis), and 3 from the nine-banded armadillo (Dasypus novemcinctus). The samples were collected after spontaneous defecation of the animals, induced by the stress of manual capture, and from animals killed in vehicle collisions on highways. The feces were placed in collection jars, preserved in sodium dichromate, and sent to the Veterinary Parasitology Laboratory of the Institute of Health Sciences-UFBA in September 2023. The coproparasitological techniques used were Willis (qualitative flotation) and Hoffman, Pons, and Janer (spontaneous sedimentation). The results obtained from the two techniques, respectively, were eggs of the Order Strongylida (65.52%; 77.19%), eggs of Aspidodera (24.14%; 24.56%), eggs of Trichuridae (3.45%; 3.50%), and oocysts of Eimeria spp (74.14%; 77.19%); suggesting that coexistence with domestic animals could influence such parasitism and reinforcing the hypothesis that armadillos may act as potential reservoirs of endoparasites.

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