

FOREWARD

Flies which are commonly seen inside and outside every human settlement act as carriers of harmful viruses, bacteria, and other pathogens. Besides, many of these flies are parasitic in man and in domesticated animals during the larval stages of their life cycles, infesting wounds of healthy or sickly creatures, feeding on their tissues, causing enormous harm and finally leading to death. These harmful flies normally breed in all kind of decaying organic matter found in garbage dumps and refuse depots and are found in abundance inside or in the vicinity of human dwellings. The presence of such breeding grounds near human settlements results in steady and alarming increase of their population. These flies also settle on carcasses, other decaying organic matter and also on food stuff, fruits and vegetables.

Eradication of these harmful flies is indeed a difficult problem in any country. An efficient solution of this problem necessitates prior knowledge of the breeding media used by these flies, their true destructive potentiality, their degree of liking to human settlements and their seasonal prevalence. Zoologists, physicians and veterinarians in socio-economically advanced countries are providing the authorities dealing with sanitation, health and hygiene with

the exact and detailed data in these regards. Availability of such data makes it easier to eradicate the harmful flies by treatment of garbages at the appropriate time.

It appears from the literature extant on this subject that no such work has so far been undertaken in this country. Keeping this lacuna in mind, the present investigation was undertaken for obtaining the detailed knowledge of the breeding habits and destructive potentiality of some flies, their seasonal abundance and the degree of their liking to human settlements. Sex-ratio of various species of flies was investigated by means of statistical methods. An effort has also been made to identify the flies responsible for causing myiasis in domesticated animals and poultry in the study area, i.e., Siliguri and its environs in the foothills of the Himalayas, in the district of Darjeeling, West Bengal, India.