



## The Reduviidae (Hemiptera: Heteroptera) of Ipassa Reserve (Makokou, Gabon)

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### Abstract

In the frame of global and rapid inventories of biodiversity, a first inventory of the Reduviidae of the Ipassa Reserve in Makokou, Gabon is done, including recent field surveys as well as information from museum collections. A total of 42 species, including 27 newly recorded from Ipassa Reserve and 16 also newly recorded from Gabon, are listed. Their distributions, and a general discussion on the geographical distributions of the species, are discussed.

**Key words:** Biodiversity, inventory, new records from Gabon; museum collections

### Introduction

Because of human pressure on environment and global warming, society has a greater interest in our knowledge of biodiversity. Pressures lead to threatened areas such as “hot-spots” (Myers *et al.* 2000), and the results are threatened species, particularly in tropical forests. A major problem is also the poor state of knowledge on the species themselves, including their habits and distribution. Human pressure which leads to global warming accelerates the need of tools for conservation management and sustainable development. In order to quickly assemble the biological information necessary to catalyze conservation action and improve biodiversity protection, an inventory of species is a first step if conducted as Rapid Assessment Programs (RAP, Conservation International). However, species inventories require high human and financial effort, whereas specimen records in natural history collections can provide many additional references of species without cost. In addition these records provide information on the historical distributions of species in a given area.

The Congo Basin forests are the world's second largest dense humid tropical forests after the Amazon. Gabon's forests are part of this extensive tropical forest. It is not considered to be a hot spot as defined by Myers *et al.* (2000), like the Guinean Western African forests, but it is also under human pressure, particularly due to logging and slash-and-burn agriculture. Gabon is one of the few African countries where the forest is quite well preserved. The forest actually covers 80% of the country, and 10 % of it is included in one of the thirteen protected areas.

The natural Reserve of Ipassa is one of these well preserved forests. It is located along the Ivindo river, between Makokou and Ovan in the northeast of Gabon (around 0° 30' N and 12° 48' E). It is a large area (3,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of dense evergreen forest, protected since 1971. The natural Reserve of Ipassa was created in 2002. Several surveys of entomologists were made in the past and occasional collecting was carried out also by other scientists. However, no study provides a global view or collects data to present an overview of the insect fauna of the Reserve. Because considering all of the Insecta, or even just the orders, we shall consider smaller groups such as families separately.