



Catalog of the vespid wasps of Iran (Hymenoptera, Vespidae)

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Abstract

Fifty-one genera and 182 species of vespid wasps, belonging to four subfamilies, have been recorded from Iran. A catalog for the region is provided. Locality data for 64 species which were collected or examined during this study are presented. Among them, 10 species represent new records for Iran. An illustrated key to the recorded genera is also presented.

Key words: Vespidae, fauna, new records, Iran

Introduction

The vespid wasps comprise a moderately large family of Hymenoptera, including approximately 4984 described extant species. Vespidae are a cosmopolitan family, with particular species richness in the tropics. Most species are solitary, but there are also many social species. In solitary species the larva is most commonly predatory on other insects, particularly caterpillars, in a cell constructed and provisioned by the adult female, but there are species in which the provisions are pollen. In the social species, the larva is progressively fed by the adult female on masticated insects or more rarely also on glandular secretions.

The nest is constructed in many different shapes, such as mud pots or a series of mud cellules in solitary species, and as small or large, usually paper, nests on trees or in the soil and other places in social species. A few species are social parasites and live in nests of other social species. The most highly social species have three castes, queen, worker and male (Carpenter, 1987).

Very different classifications have been proposed for Vespidae historically. Bequaert (1918) divided the family into 10 subfamilies, and Bradley (1922) made it 11. Richards (1962) divided the superfamily