

OUTBREAKS OF OCCUPATIONAL DERMATITIS CAUSED BY *PYEMOTES VENTRICOSUS*.

UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PERUGIA



I. MORETTA¹, L. STINGENI², M.A. PRINCIPATO^{1,3}

¹Dip. di Medicina Veterinaria, Università degli Studi di Perugia;

²Dip. di Medicina e Chirurgia, Sez. di Dermatologia Clinica, Allergologica e Venereologica, Università degli Studi di Perugia; ³Centro di Ricerca Urania, Perugia

INTRODUCTION. *Pyemotes ventricosus* Newport, 1850 (Acarina: Pyemotidae) is a mite known in Italy for its parasitic association with the furniture worm, generally *Oligomerus ptilinoides* (Coleoptera: Anobiidae) and, above all, as a cause of dermatitis in humans inside homes with worm-eaten furniture.

The episodes of entomodermatosis that we report were related to the professional activity of the patients and had recurred periodically, for some years, only in the spring-summer period, during their work.

MATERIALS AND METHODS. In the period 2018-2019, on the recommendation of the Dermatological Clinic of Perugia, we carried out an environmental parasitological examination (E.D.P.A.[®] or Indoor Dust Direct Examination) of the working environments of some patients who presented sting lesions of the "strophulus" type (erythematous-edemato-vesicular), distributed mainly to the trunk and arms, referable to bites of arthropod (Stingeni et al., 2017).

They were united by the manipulation, during the working activity, of woody material or objects and they were antique dealers (n° 3), carpenters (n° 2), restorers (n° 3) and florists who used woody material for ornamental purposes (n° 2).



Pregnant females (arrows) of *Pyemotes ventricosus* near a woodworm (*Oligomerus ptilinoides*).



Typical lesions due to *Pyemotes ventricosus* stings. The mite bites humans causing erythematous-edematous lesions, centered by a point vesicle, which are mainly distributed on the trunk and limbs.



Female of *Pyemotes ventricosus*.



Pyemotes sting scars

*MES: *Pyemotes ventricosus* gnathosome. The chelicerae (arrow) with which it stings human skin are clearly visible.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS. The E.D.P.A.[®] has detected the presence of females of *Pyemotes ventricosus* in all environments. The mites came out of the galleries of woodworms present in the wood of frames, antique furniture, beams, boards and various wooden objects and, even, from reeds used for ornamental purposes. The resolution of the infestation was obtained by eliminating the worm-eaten material or by treating it with heat (65° C). The environment was then treated with a common residual pyrethroid in order to eliminate any free mites.

The complete resolution of the infestation is evidenced by the absence of new bites starting from two days post-treatment. Following the environmental remediation, the complete recovery of the patients, treated exclusively with a symptomatic therapy (corticosteroid ointments and oral antihistamines), was obtained in about two weeks, and no relapses were observed during the following 1-year follow-up.