

Diversity of Braconid Parasitoids (Hymenoptera: Braconide) of Horticultural Insect Pests from Kolhapur, Maharashtra

T. R. Patil¹ and T. M. Chougale²

Research Student, Department of Zoology, Shivaji University Kolhapur¹

Assistant Professor and Head, Department of Zoology, Bhogawati Mahavidyalaya, Kurukali. (MS) India²

Abstract: *Braconids (Hymenoptera: Braconidae) are the potential biocontrol agents of insect pests attacking economically important crop plants. Braconids are exclusively parasitic and are reported mainly on lepidopterous pests. These flies parasitize egg, larval, and pupal stage of the insect pests. Horticultural crops are attacked by lepidopterous pests causing severe damage to crops and there by minimizes crop yield. The use of braconid parasitoids as pest control agents helps to reduce the pest population. The braconids are rearable in laboratories and reared parasitoids can be used in pest control programs. The correct identification, host preference and parasitic potential of the parasitoids plays important role in their utilization in pest control programs. The species reported belongs to genus Cotesia, Apanteles, Bracon, Glyptapenteles, Chilonus, Dolichogenidea, Agathis, Meteorus etc. and have been found parasitizing the insect pests of different horticultural plants. Total 35 species of braconid parasitoids were reported from the Kolhapur district, Maharashtra. The studies will help to add knowledge on number of braconid species found in study area and also explore them to use in biocontrol programs in the region.*

Keywords: Survey, Braconids, Parasitoids, Horticultural Plants, Insect Pests, etc.

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