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Prevalence and parasite burdens in coyote (*Canis latrans*) feces from the Médanos de Samalayuca Flora and Fauna Protection Area, Mexico

Inhalt

This study evaluated gastrointestinal parasite prevalence and infection intensity in coyotes (*Canis latrans*) from two sectors of the Médanos de Samalayuca Flora and Fauna Protection Area (Chihuahua, Mexico) differing in anthropogenic disturbance.

Methods: A total of 180 fecal samples were collected from a disturbed ($n = 110$) and a less disturbed sector ($n = 70$). Scats were identified as coyote feces using published criteria, including size, tapered ends, deposition along trails, associated tracks, and hair and bone remains. Samples were examined by centrifugal flotation, Hoffman sedimentation, and McMaster techniques.

Results: Overall, 97 samples (54%) were positive for at least one parasite taxon. 15 taxa, mostly identified to genus level, were detected microscopically. The most prevalent taxa were *Toxocara* (29%), *Ancylostoma* (28%), *Strongyloides* (16%), *Balantidium* (8%), and *Cystoisospora* (7%). Prevalence was similar between sectors (52% and 57%), but the disturbed sector exhibited higher infection intensities, particularly for *Ancylostoma* (1,890 EPG), *Strongyloides* (800 EPG), and *Toxocara* (600 EPG). Samples collected during the cold season were 2.17 times more likely to contain parasitic forms.

Conclusions: Similar prevalence but higher infection intensity in the disturbed sector suggests that parasite burden may better indicate ecosystem alteration. Zoonotic taxa highlight the importance of wildlife parasite surveillance within a One Health framework.

Keywords

wildlife health, parasite burden, ecosystem disturbance, zoonoses, *Canis latrans*, One Health.

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Professional Status of the Speaker

Graduate Student

Junior Scientist Status

Yes, I am a Junior Scientist.

Author: PETERS CABRERA, Jose (Servicio Nacional de Calidad y Salud Animal - SENACSA; Itaipu Binacional, Paraguay)

Co-Autores: BATISTA, Lilian (Centro de Ensino Superior de Valença, CESVA, UNIFAA. Rio de Janeiro/ Brasil.); ES-CARCEGA, Angelica (Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez, Mexico); GATICA, Ana (Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez, Mexico); MARTINEZ-CALDERAS, Jesus (Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez, Mexico); VITAL, Cuauhciuatl (Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez, Mexico)

Vortragende(r): PETTERS CABRERA, Jose (Servicio Nacional de Calidad y Salud Animal - SENACSA; Itaipu Binacional, Paraguay)

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