

HAEMATOLOGICAL PARAMETERS OF THREE SPECIES OF WILD CAUGHT MICROCHIROPTERAN BATS, *MINIOPTERUS SCHREIBERSII*, *TAPHOZOUS MELANOPOGON* AND *HIPPOSIDEROS LANKADIVA* IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

This study, for the first time in South Asia, examines haematological parameters of three species of wild caught Sri Lankan microchiropteran bats, belonging to three different families having different global zoogeographical distributions; *Miniopterus schreibersii* (Vespertilionidae; $n = 12$), *Taphozous melanopogon* (Emballonuridae; $n = 19$) and *Hipposideros lankadiva* (Hipposiderosidae; $n = 15$). Blood samples were obtained from the median vein and the total white blood cell (WBC) count, red blood cell (RBC) count, packed cell volume (PCV), haemoglobin content (Hb), mean corpuscular volume (MCV) and mean corpuscular haemoglobin content (MCHC) were determined using standard haematological techniques. Interspecies differences existed in some of the parameters monitored, *i.e.* PCV, MCV, WBC and RBC counts, % of neutrophils and lymphocytes. On the other hand, a gender discrepancy was recorded for *T. melanopogon* with respect to neutrophils and lymphocytes, and for *M. schreibersii* with respect to the total WBC count. The highest WBC count and the lowest PCV and MCV were found in *M. schreibersii*. *T. melanopogon* registered the highest percentage of lymphocytes and the lowest percentage of neutrophils, while *H. lankadiva* possessed the highest MCV. Haematological values were recorded also for a single lactating *T. melanopogon*.

Key words: haematology, Microchiroptera, *Miniopterus schreibersii*, *Taphozous melanopogon*, *Hipposideros lankadiva*, Sri Lanka.