THE ABUNDANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECTING HEMATOPHAGOUS ARTHROPODS IN TRINIDAD

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Haematophagous arthropods thrive in the favourable climate and vegetation of the tropics. These include: *Phlebotomine* sandflies, *Culicoides* midges, *Ctenocephalides felis* fleas, *Rhipicephalus* ticks, *Simuliidae* (Blackflies), and *Tabanidae* (Horseflies), *Aedes aegypti* and culex mosquitoes and 2 (two) species of the triatomine bug (*Panstrongylus geniculate* and *Rhodnius pictipes*). The environmental conditions influencing the abundance of haematophagous arthropod vectors of public health and veterinary significance were investigated.

Sampling sites in Trinidad were evaluated for the influence of abiotic factors such as elevation, vegetation and suitable host species of animals utilizing statistical tools for ecology from the R programme. These programs showed differences in the number of groups, composition and similarities of host animals and hiding spaces. It was determined that the best models have water sources, host animals and elevations of over 60M. The most influential species were *Culex* spp. (0.26), *Aedes aegypti-Aedes albopictus* (0.41), fleas (0.56), *Culicoides* spp. (0.69) and ticks (0.78).

Word count: 150