



Extent of Natural Parasitisation of Cocoons of *Cotesia marginiventris* (CRESSON), A Larval Parasitoid on *Helicoverpa armigera* (Hübner)

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Abstract: Pod borer, *Helicoverpa armigera* is a major pest on pigeonpea in Telangana State and *Cotesia marginiventris* (Cresson), a braconid is its key natural enemy. However, the efficacy of *C. marginiventris* as a natural enemy can be disrupted by hyperparasitism. Weekly observations on population of the pest and the parasitoid were recorded from their first appearance in the second fortnight October to early December. Cocoons of *C. marginiventris* were collected in late October each year coinciding with peak population of the pest (*H. armigera*) and maximum parasitisation by the braconid wasp. Results revealed that *C. marginiventris*, a dominant primary parasitoid on *H. armigera* caused 30.33% mortality of the pest. But its cocoons were hyperparasitised by three Hymenopterans viz., *Eurytoma braconidis*, *Mesochorus* sp. and *Tetrastichus cotesiae* to an extent 12.07%. Among these, the most dominating genus, *Mesochorus* caused 33.33-100% parasitisation followed by *T. cotesiae* (50.00 %) and *E. braconidis* (0-33.33 %) of the cocoons. This is a first report of the hyperparasitoids of *C. marginiventris* on *H. armigera* in pigeonpea ecosystem in Rajendranagar, Hyderabad.

Key Words: *Cotesia*, Hyperparasitoids, Pigeonpea
