

## Research Outcomes

(Grant No. RP-01/2022)

Title: ***Occurrence of Acid Fly (Paederus sp.) (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Paederinae) in Vavuniya, Sri Lanka: A Case Study at the University Hostel Premises and Its Surroundings***

### Background

Recurrent skin dermatitis cases among students residing at the hostel in University of Vavuniya were suspected to be caused by acid flies (*Paederus* spp.). The research aimed to identify the species involved, assess the extent of infestation, analyze seasonal variation, and evaluate health impacts to propose suitable preventive measures.

### Key Findings

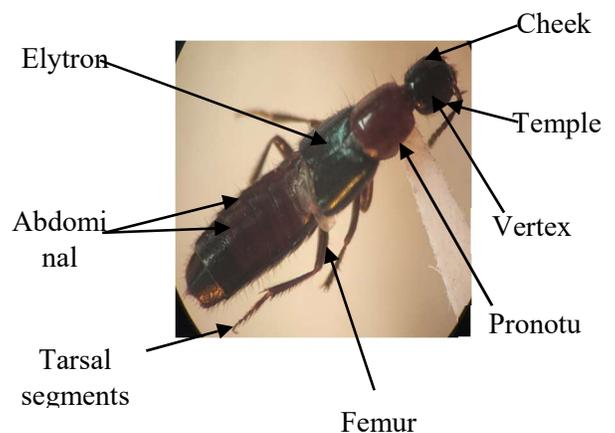
- **Identification:** The insect species was identified as ***Paederus fuscipes***.

Common name: **Acid fly**; Scientific name: ***Paederus fuscipes***

This may cause skin blisters, skin irritation and sometimes fever, if it is in contact with your body. The presence of this insect is recorded in a few months in an year but not always. The purpose of this notice is to make you aware of this insect. The diagram as shown below will be useful for the identification of this insect.



***Adult Paederus fuscipes (lateral view)***



***Adult Paederus fuscipes (dorsal view)***

- **Awareness:** About 89% of students were aware of the insect and associated health risks, while 11% were unaware.
- **Seasonality:** Infestations were most common in April, May, June, August, and November, closely linked with local paddy farming and harvesting activities, which disturb beetle habitats.
- **Health Impacts:** Students reported skin irritation, fever, and secondary inflammation. Most recovered within 4–5 days, though some cases lasted more than a week. Severe lesions were observed on sensitive body parts.

### **Recommendations for Self-Protection**

The following steps are recommended to minimize encounters with *Paederus* beetles and reduce the risk of skin irritation.

- **Environmental Management:** Maintaining cleanliness, reducing potential breeding sites, and employing environmentally friendly insect management methods.
- **Structural Modifications:** Seal cracks, gaps, unnecessary doors, windows, and walls to prevent access of *Paederus* beetles to living areas.
- **Personal Protection:** Take personal protective measures, such as wearing long sleeves, and pants, especially when they are in areas prone to *Paederus* beetle presence. Insect repellents and bed nets can also be used as additional safeguards.