

**B-84: Seasonal fluctuation of the population of *Aphis gossypii*
Glover (Homoptera: Aphididae) on chilli, *Capsicum annuum* L. Aralaganwila**

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Aphis gossypii Glover has become a major pest of chilli in the Dry Zone during recent years. This pest is important as a sap-sucker and virus vector. Field sampling was carried out fortnightly followed by laboratory rearing to study *A. gossypii* and its parasitoid and predator populations under pesticide free conditions on chilli at Regional Agricultural Research Centre, Aralaganwila, from 1987 to 1993. The pest preferred to infest more succulent parts, especially during seedling stage of chilli plants. The population showed 2 peaks: from February to April and from mid June to October. Predators, parasitoids and weather factors were responsible for population fluctuations. Major predators were *Scymnus latemaculatus* Motschulsky, *Cheilomenes sexmaculata* Fab., *Brumoides suturalis* Fab., *Propylea dissecta* Mulsant, *Micraspis discolor* Fab., *Illeis* sp., *Harmonia octamaculata* Fab. and *Coccinella transversalis* Fab. (Coleoptera: coccinellidae), *Ischiodon scutellaris* Fab., and *Paragus yerburiensis* Stuckenberg (Diptera: Syrphidae) and *Leucopis* sp. (Diptera: Chamaemyiidae). Major parasitoids were *Aphelinus* sp. (Hymenoptera: Aphelinidae) and *Pachyneuron* sp. (Hymenoptera: Pteromalidae). The trends of seasonal variation of aphid population and weather factors indicated that the higher temperature and low humidity favour, while rainfall retards, the build up of aphid population.