



- First molecular detection of *Leishmania infantum* in *Sergentomyia minuta* (Diptera, Psychodidae)
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Short communication

First molecular detection of *Leishmania infantum* in *Sergentomyia minuta* (Diptera, Psychodidae) in Alentejo, southern Portugal



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ABSTRACT

Protozoan parasites, such as *Leishmania* spp., are the causative agents of many insect-borne infectious diseases with medical and veterinary importance. Leishmaniasis, caused by *Leishmania* spp., is transmitted by female phlebotomine sand flies. In the Alentejo region of Portugal, located at the north of Algarve, cases of human and canine leishmaniasis caused by *Leishmania infantum* have been notified. However, no recent studies regarding the sand fly fauna in the region are available. We therefore aimed to explore the phlebotomine sand fly species found in both, Évora and Beja Districts, to gain an insight about the leishmaniasis epidemiology in these areas. After the identification of the insect species, PCR molecular tests were used to assess *L. infantum* infection rate in the