



Kinematic graphs based on the transition matrices highlight the patterns of the self-grooming sequences, showing the directions of the flow of materials during the grooming processes. The final removal of dust is in two regions, anterior and posterior parts i.e. from the front legs and hind legs.

COEXISTENCE OF TWO WEB-BUILDING SPIDERS *MESABOLIVAR AURANTIACUS* (PHOLCIDAE: ARANEAE) AND *AZILIA VACHONI* (TETRAGNATHIDAE: ARANEAE) IN A FOREST MICROHABITAT

Jo-Anne N. Sewlal

University of the West Indies, St. Augustine

Mesabolivar aurantiacus (Mello-Leitão) from Trinidad, West Indies are red, web-building pholcid spiders. It was often found to occupy buttress notches, that is, the space between two buttress roots. Observations have shown this species to share this microhabitat with the orb-weaving spider *Azilia vachoni* (di Caporiacco). Sharing of a microhabitat between spider conspecifics and congeners is expected, because of their similar physical and physiological requirements. However, sharing between species from different families has not been documented. The relationships that might exist between *M. aurantiacus* and *A. vachoni* were studied in the field (Arena Forest Reserve).

Buttress notch coexistence between *M. aurantiacus* and *A. vachoni* indicated that some sort of relationship/s might exist between these two species. The nature of this relationship/s could be competitive, kleptoparasitic or commensal. Orb-weavers build their webs in two orientations, either horizontally or vertically. Taking this into consideration, the existence of the first two relationships was decided by examining the orientation of *A. vachoni*'s web and its location in the buttress notch in relation to that of *M. aurantiacus*.

The final relationship centres on *Mesabolivar*'s main secondary defence mechanism "whirling". Here basically the spider basically keeps its legs on the silk of its web and moves its body in circles. Therefore if whirling is detected by *Azilia*, it could avoid the threat as well. Thus *Mesabolivar* may exhibit social facilitation towards *Azilia*.

A removal experiment and chi-square tests conducted on the data revealed both species did not prefer to share buttress notches with each other. However, when they did, *A. vachoni* was found to more often build its web using a horizontal orientation independent and under that of *M. aurantiacus*. This could be interpreted as kleptoparasitic behaviour by *A. vachoni* towards *M. aurantiacus*.