

MATING FREQUENCY IS RELATED TO SURFACE AREA AND SURFACE-AREA-TO-VOLUME RATIOS IN *CENTROBOLUS* COOK, 1897

MARK I. COOPER

UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract - I tested for relationships between male and female surface-area-to-volume ratios and mating frequency in red millipedes *Centrobolus*. Surface-area-to-volume ratios were related to mating frequency ($r=-0.91$, Z score= -5.61 , $n=16$, $p<0.01$). Male surface-area-to-volume ratios appeared related to male mating frequencies ($r=-0.93$, Z score= -3.73 , $n=8$, $p<0.01$). Female surface- area-to-volume ratios appeared related to female mating frequencies ($r=-0.93$, Z score= -3.63 , $n=8$, $p<0.01$). There was a relationship between surface-area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies when the sexes were pooled ($r=-0.91$, Z score= -5.61 , $n=16$, $p<0.01$). There was no relationship between surface area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies in *C. inscriptus* ($r=0.21$, Z score= 0.48 , $n=8$, $p=0.32$) or *C. anulatus* ($r=-0.20$, Z score= -0.45 , $n=8$, $p=0.33$). Surface areas were not related to mating frequencies ($r=0.12$, Z score= 0.44 , $n=16$, $p=0.33$). Surface areas were related to mating frequencies in males ($r=0.93$, Z score= 3.73 , $n=8$, $p<0.01$). Surface areas were related to mating frequencies in females ($r=-0.93$, Z score= -3.63 , $n=8$, $p<0.01$). There was no relationship between surface area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies in *C. anulatus* ($r=-0.20$, Z score= -0.45 , $n=8$, $p=0.33$) or *C. inscriptus* ($r=-0.21$, Z score= -0.48 , $n=8$, $p=0.32$).

I. INTRODUCTION

The forest genus of diplopods belonging to the Order Spirobolida found along the eastern coast of southern Africa was the subject of this study. The millipede genus *Centrobolus* is found in the temperate South African subregion, its northern limits on the east coast of southern Africa being about -17° latitude S. It occurs in all the forests of the coastal belt from the Cape Peninsula to Beira in Mocambique. While the coastal forests of the South-West and Eastern Cape are mist belt temperate forests, those of the Transkei, Natal, Zululand and Mocambique are somewhat different, being better described as East Coast Bush, they are developed almost entirely in a narrow strip of the littoral on a dune sand substratum, and are more tropical in aspect and composition than those to the west of them. There is a summer rainfall of 762-1016mm, a uniform temperature, and an absence of frost; the component trees of the coastal bush with their abundant creepers and lianes, while not usually reaching a height of more than 11 meters, provide a dense covering with abundant shade and humidity at ground level. As essentially shade-

loving Diplopoda, the members of the genus are especially well represented in these littoral forests of the eastern half of the subcontinent. Members of the genus all have polygynandrous mating systems with sperm competition and cryptic female choice [1-87].

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Two morphometric parameters were used to obtain measurements, length and width, both of which were obtained from the published literature [18, 91, 92]. Surface areas were calculated based on the formula for the same cylinder $SA = 2\pi r(r+h)$ in *C. anulatus* Attems, 1934, and *C. inscriptus* Attems, 1928 [18]. The data were collected during the rainy season because in southern Africa millipede surface activity is strongly seasonal and related to feeding and reproduction [88, 89] and this is also when population densities peak [90]. The two species of millipedes were sampled in their indigenous tropical coastal forest habitat at Twin Streams Farm, Mtunzini, South Africa ($28^\circ 55'S$; $31^\circ 45'E$). It is within this part of the typical coastal forest belt (Acocks, 1975) that *C. anulatus* and *C. inscriptus* are in geographical sympatry. An area of forest with continuous tree canopy cover was delimited and all sampling occurred within those bounds. In the first season, two temporally separate sampling efforts were made. In the following season a single sampling effort involved hand collecting all individual millipedes on the ground and in shrubs and trees separately, with the former measured on the ground and the latter as in the trees ($>30\text{cm}$ but $<3\text{m}$ above ground surface). The two species were morphologically separated based upon the presence of yellow flashes, red legs, and red heads (*C. inscriptus*) vs. discrete red-black annulations without yellow flashes, black legs, and blackheads (*C. anulatus*). Over a period of three full days, the total numbers of each species collected were used to calculate the relative abundance of each species

within the forest patch. The copulation frequencies were calculated as the number of copulating pairs divided by the population sample to get mating frequencies. Surface areas were related to volumes to get surface-area-to-volume ratios which were tested against mating frequencies for correlations at <https://www.gigacalculator.com/calculators/correlation-coefficient-calculator.php>.

III. RESULTS

Male surface-area-to-volume ratios appeared related to male mating frequencies (Figure 1: $r=-0.93139991$, $Z \text{ score}=-3.73166936$, $n=8$, $p=0.00009514$). Female surface-area-to-volume ratios appeared related to female mating frequencies (Figure 2: $r=-0.92532821$, $Z \text{ score}=-3.63333017$, $n=8$, $p=0.00013993$). There was a relationship between surface-area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies when the sexes were pooled (Figure 3: $r=-0.91458556$, $Z \text{ score}=-5.60616579$, $n=16$, $p=0.00000001$). There was no relationship between surface area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies in *C. inscriptus* ($r=0.21166688$, $Z \text{ score}=0.48056626$, $n=8$, $p=0.31541240$) or *C. anulatus* ($r=-0.19930448$, $Z \text{ score}=-0.45170397$, $n=8$, $p=0.32574115$). Surface areas were not related to mating frequencies ($r=0.12195322$, $Z \text{ score}=0.44190811$, $n=16$, $p=0.32927788$). Surface areas were related to mating frequencies in males (Figure 4: $r=0.93139991$, $Z \text{ score}=3.73166936$, $n=8$, $p=0.00009514$). Surface areas were related to mating frequencies in females (Figure 5: $r=-0.92532821$, $Z \text{ score}=-3.63333017$, $n=8$, $p=0.00013993$). There was no relationship between surface area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies in *C. anulatus* ($r=-0.19930448$, $Z \text{ score}=-0.45170397$, $n=8$, $p=0.32574115$) or *C. inscriptus* ($r=-0.21166688$, $Z \text{ score}=-0.48056626$, $n=8$, $p=0.31541240$).

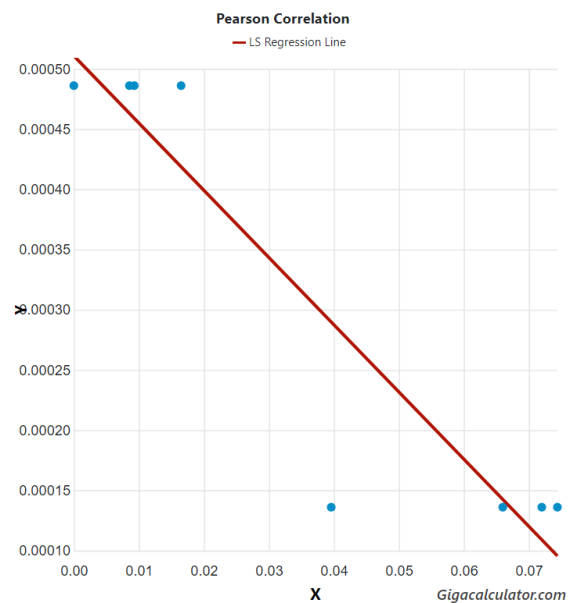


Figure 1. Relationship between male surface-area-to-volume ratios and male mating frequency in two species of *Centrobolus* Cook, 1897.

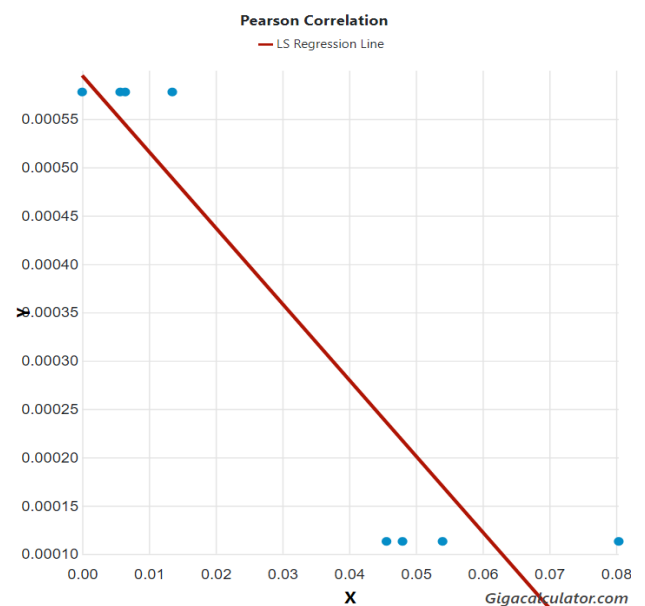


Figure 2. Relationship between female surface-area-to-volume ratios and female mating frequencies in two species of *Centrobolus* Cook, 1897.

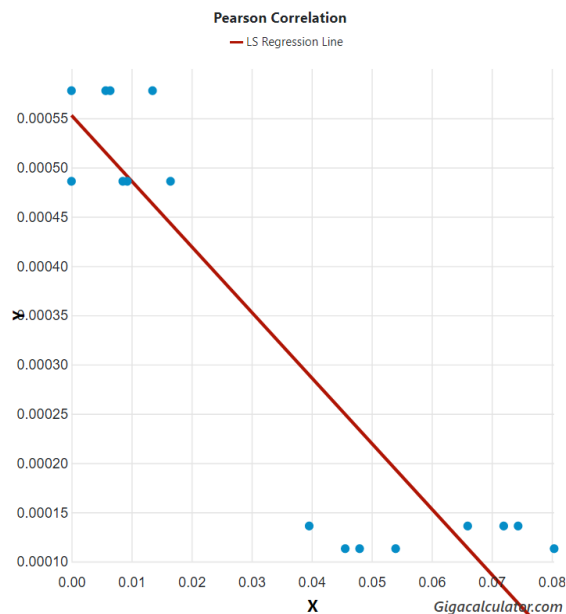


Figure 3. Relationship between male surface-area-to-volume ratio and mating frequencies in two species of *Centrobolus* Cook, 1897.

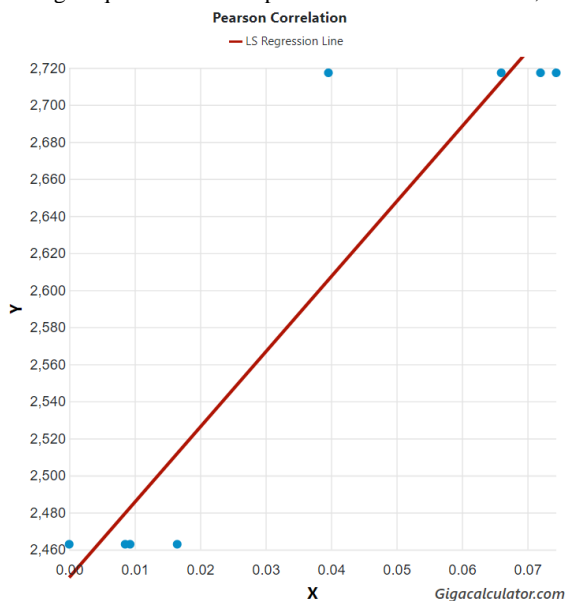


Figure 4. Relationship between male surface areas and male mating frequencies in two species of *Centrobolus* Cook, 1897.

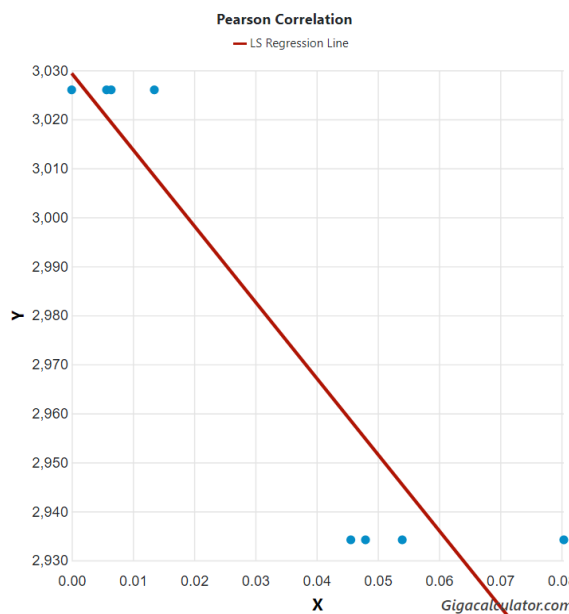


Figure 5. Relationship between female surface areas and male mating frequencies in two species of *Centrobolus* Cook, 1897.

IV. DISCUSSION

New relationships were discovered between male and female surface areas and surface-area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies. The surface area relationships show opposite results across the sexes with a negative relationship in males and a positive relationship in females in surface areas but both surface-area-to-volume ratios and mating frequencies are all negative. The absence of species-specific relationships means the occurrences are purely sexually selected with the predators on these Mullerian mimicry pair of species possibly acting differently on each of the sexes.

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