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ISOLATION OF ST. LOUIS ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS FROM
Deinocerites pseudus IN PANAMA¹

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During the course of yellow fever surveillance activities in Panama, a station for the collection of mosquitoes was established in the spring of 1964 in a mangrove swamp near Juan Díaz, a small rural community located at the mouth of the Juan Díaz River just east of Panama City. The virus of St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) was isolated from a pool of 46 *Deinocerites pseudus* Dyar and Knab mosquitoes captured at this station between 1830 and 2100 on August 10, 1964 with human bait. The virus, which was isolated in suckling mice, was found to be closely related by cross hemagglutination-inhibition, complement-fixation and mouse neutralization tests to the Buena Vista strain of SLE previously isolated from *Sabethes chloropterus* in Panama (Galindo, et al., 1959). An agent identified as SLE virus was re-isolated from these mosquitoes approximately one month later.

The isolation of SLE virus from *Deinocerites*

mosquitoes is of interest since it represents the first reported isolation of a viral agent from this genus, which is known to breed by preference in crab holes and was once thought to have lost the bloodsucking habit (Bates, 1949). However, it has been recently observed that *D. pseudus* readily attacks several species of vertebrates, including man (Galindo, 1967), and is presumably, therefore, a potential vector of this medically important agent.

References

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