

**Notes on the feeding behavior of *Teratocoris saundersi*  
(Hemiptera: Miridae) in Iceland:  
phytophagy, zoophagy, and adventitious biting**

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**Abstract.** Host plants of the stenodemine mirid *Teratocoris saundersi* Douglas & Scott, 1869 in Iceland include the grasses *Agrostis capillaris*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Elymus repens*, and *Leymus arenarius* (Poaceae), and sedges, *Carex* spp. (Cyperaceae). Specific host associations for *T. saundersi* in Iceland previously were unknown. Larvae and adults fed mainly on leaves and stems of their graminoid hosts; during cloudy weather, the bugs were observed in thatch beneath host plants. An adult fed on nectar from a flower of arctic sea rocket, *Cakile arctica* (Brassicaceae). Larvae and adults fed occasionally as predators or scavengers on small Diptera and pierced human skin. Observations on zoophagy further document the use of animal matter by species of *Teratocoris* Fieber, 1858, whereas adventitious biting by *T. saundersi* is reported for the first time. The zoophagous tendencies of *T. saundersi* might contrast with the feeding habits of stenodemines that are regarded as strict phytophages, for example, most species of *Stenodema* Laporte, 1833 and *Trigonotylus* Fieber, 1858.

**Key words.** Heteroptera, Miridae, Stenodemini, *Teratocoris*, feeding habits, host plants, trophic plasticity, Iceland, Palearctic Region

### Introduction

The Miridae, or plant bugs, containing slightly more than 10,000 described species, are the most speciose of the heteropteran or true bug families (SCHUH & SLATER 1995, HENRY 2009). Mirids also exhibit great trophic diversity. Many species are opportunists that feed along a continuum between the extremes of strict phytophagy and strict zoophagy. Such species can be characterized as phyto-zoophages or zoo-phytophages, with their use of plant and animal matter depending on factors such as condition of the host plant for mainly phytophagous species and prey densities, in addition to availability of nectar and pollen, for mainly zoophagous species.