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On the Polymorphic Meadow Spittlebug, *Philaenus spumarius* (L.) (Homoptera: Cercopidae)

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**Abstract:** Due to its interesting biological aspects, the meadow spittlebug *Philaenus spumarius* has received great attention from biologists for decades. It has been one of the extensively studied species in ecology and genetics. This homopteran insect shows very high habitat diversity and therefore has a wide global distribution. Adults exhibit a heritable colour/pattern polymorphism on the dorsal surface throughout its range. A similar colour/pattern variation also occurs in certain ventral parts. Recent laboratory studies have dealt with its polyandrous aspect that is, females may mate several times with different males and the offspring of a single female may be fathered, therefore, by several males. Although the effects of multiple mating on natural populations of *P. spumarius* are not well known, it may have great evolutionary importance through increased genetic heterogeneity and high fitness.

**Key Words:** Meadow spittlebug, *Philaenus spumarius*, Homoptera, Cercopidae, polymorphism, melanism, genetics, polyandry

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