

6th International Congress on Aerobiology
Perugia, Italy, August 31 - September 5, 1998

Abstract Form

Deadline for receipt of Abstract
31 January 1998

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- Type Abstract, in English, within the form (112 x 178 mm); abstract will appear exactly as you submit it;
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Giuseppe Frenguelli
Dep. Plant Biology
University of Perugia
Borgo XX Giugno, 74
06121 Perugia - Italy

DESERT WEEDS POLLEN IN SAUDI ARABIA: A POSSIBLE MAJOR CAUSE OF RESPIRATORY ALLERGY

Al-Frayh AR, Hasnain SM., Gad-el-Rab, M.O., Al-Mobariek K. and Sultan Al-Sedairy.

Biological & Medical Research, King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre and College of Medicine, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

This study is an extension of our previous work on allergenicity to desert weeds in Saudi Arabia. Aerobiological studies at three other geographically distant locations using Burkard Volumetric Spore Trap also confirmed weeds pollen to be a major contributors in the area. Several species of weeds are indigeneous to Saudi desert.

Airborne pollen grains from *Chenopodium album*, *Cyperus rotundus*, *Amaranthus viridis*, *Rumex sp.* and *Plantago sp.* were identified in higher concentrations. Skin prick test conducted using commercial extracts on more than 500 asthmatic patients in six different regions revealed a high degree of sensitization. In Abha 21.8% (n=156), Al-Gassim 75.5% (n=66), Al-Hofuf 16.7% (n=11) and in Gizan 9% (n=12) of the patient reacted positively to various weeds pollen including *Atriplex polycarpa*. *Chenopodium album* reacted in 21.8% in Abha, 81.8% in Al-Gassim, 8.3% in Al-Hofuf and 18.1% in Gizan. *Salsola tennifolia* reacted in 14.7% in Abha, 75.5% in Al-Gassim, 25% in Al-Hofuf and 18.1% in Gizan. *Rumex crispus* were found positive in 7% in Abha, 27.3% in Al-Gassim, zero in Al-Hofuf, 18.1% in Gizan. Apart from *Cynodon dactylon* (Bermuda) Grass in Abha and *Prosopis juliflora* (Mesquite) in Al-Gassim regions highest reactivities were recorded by members of the chenopodiacea weed in all regions. It is thus implicated that exacerbation of symptoms in patients during the period corresponding to weeds pollen in the air may be caused by desert weeds growing in every part of the Kingdom.

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