

GESTATION IN THE ORIENTAL VAMPIRES

BATS, which generally bring forth only one young at birth, have asymmetrical development of the uterine cornua. Species of bats in which details of pregnancy are available, show that gestation generally occurs in the right side of the female genitalia. The findings of Vogt¹ and Duval² in *Vespertilio murinus* (now called *Myotis myotis*); Courrier³ in *Miniopterus schreibersi*; Baker and Bird⁴ in *Miniopterus australis*; Mathews⁵ in *Miniopterus dasythrix* and Sherman⁶ in *Tadarida cynocephala* support this view. My observations on *Rhinolophus rouxi* (Temn.) and *Tadarida tragata* (Dobs.) add two more instances to this category.

It appears as if this asymmetry has developed from a condition in which both the uterine cornua and the ovaries were functional. In *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Deansley and Warwick⁷ recorded 70 per cent. of the pregnancies in the right uterine cornu, 25 per cent. in the left and 5 per cent. in both. Guthrie and Jeffers,⁸ and Wimsatt⁹ described in *Myotis lucifugus* ova coming as frequently from the left ovary as from the right, but with pregnancies limited to the right side.

An instance of unilateral degeneration was found by Mathews¹⁰ in *Rhinolophus hipposideros minutus*. In this species the left uterine cornu is considerably smaller, and appears to be correlated with the functional atrophy of the left ovary which does not produce mature ova. Consequently the pregnancies are limited to the right side. It appears fortuitous which horn of the uterus becomes functional.

My observations on *Lyroderma lyra lyra* (Geof.) and *Megaderma spasma* (L.) the two Oriental Vampires of the family Megadermidæ are interesting in this connection. Immature females in both the above forms have symmetrical uterine cornua. With the

attainment of sexual maturity the rapid enlargement of the left uterine cornu results in a distinct asymmetry. Sections show that only the left ovary is functional. A collection of these forms over a period of five years reveals that all the pregnancies are restricted to the left uterine cornu.

The findings of Mathews⁵ in *Cardioderma cor* (family Megadermidæ), revealed that pregnancies filled both uterine cornua but with the placenta attached to the left pole of the uterus suggesting that the development must have started in the left uterine cornu. He also recorded in *Nycteris luteola* (family Nycteridæ) four pregnancies in the right uterine cornu and seven in the left showing a higher percentage in the latter.

In the families Megadermidæ and Nycteridæ there is a tendency for the left side of the female genitalia to be the functional one. The cause for this asymmetry is not clear.

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Section Meeting of the United Nations Scientific Conference.

After attending the Conference at Lake Success on his way back he will attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the International Council of Scientific Unions to be held at Copenhagen, from 14th to 16th September 1949.