

First finding of Chagas disease vectors associated with wild bushes in the Metropolitan Region of Chile Primer hallazgo de vectores de la enfermedad de Chagas asociados a matorrales silvestres en la Región Metropolitana, Chile

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Background: Insects of the subfamily triatominae are the biological vectors of *Trypanosoma cruzi*, the causal agent of Chagas disease. **Aim:** To search for wild colonies of triatomines in the Metropolitan Region of Chile. **Material and Methods:** Ad hoc traps were placed in two endemic zones of the Metropolitan Region of Chile, during 30 nights. The dejections of 16 *T. infestans* and 43 *M. spinolai* specimens were examined under the microscope, searching for live metacyclic trypomastigotes. A polymerase chain reaction (PCR) was performed in macerates of all insects looking for *T. cruzi* DNA. **Results:** A total of 269 bugs were captured. Forty four were *Triatoma infestans* and 225 were *Mepraia spinolai*. They were not syntopic, since *T. infestans* was restricted to a Southern zone (Calera de Tango) while *M. spinolai* was only found in the Northern zone (Til-Til). Both species were found associated to terrestrial bromeliads (*Puya* sp) but *M. spinolai* was also detected in stony grounds. Microscopic examination