THE ODONATA COMMUNITY OF A BRAZILIAN VEREDA: SEASONAL PATTERNS, SPECIES DIVERSITY AND RARITY IN A PALM SWAMP ENVIRONMENT

Abstract
Studies concerning the occurrence of species and seasonality are of great importance for both the elucidation of species distribution and conservation of natural habitats. We performed a survey of Odonata species and studied their seasonality in an endemic endangered palm swamp (i.e. Veredas) environment of the Ecological Reserve of Clube de Caca e Pesca Itororo de Uberlandia, Southwestern Brazil. Between July 2010 and June 2011, we recorded 31 species of five different families and 21 genera. The community was strongly seasonal, since 24 species occurred in the wet season, while ten occurred in both dry and wet season, and only two species occurred only in the dry season. All Anisoptera species preferred lentic habitats, whereas seven of the 18 Zygopera species preferred lentic habitats and 11 species preferred lotic sites. The five Calopterygidae and Protoneuridae species preferred lotic habitats. The study site exhibits a great diversity of dragonflies and damselflies, which are important elements of the trophic chain in the Cerrado aquatic and neighboring land environments. This justifies the development of conservation actions in palm swamp areas, which are poorly known and threatened by the constant advance of urban, monoculture and pasture areas in Cerrado. (AU)