

Institute of Environmental Studies and Research  
Ain Shams University

**ECOLOGICAL - TOXICOLOGICAL STUDY  
ON HARMFUL AND USEFUL BIRDS  
IN EGYPTIAN CROPS**

**THESIS**

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**BY**

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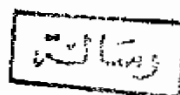
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## CONTENTS

|                                                                                                     | Page |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| INTRODUCTION                                                                                        | 1    |
| REVIEW OF LITERATURE                                                                                | 4    |
| 1. Ecology                                                                                          | 4    |
| 1.1. Survey of beneficial birds.                                                                    | 4    |
| 1.2. Survey of noxious birds.                                                                       | 12   |
| 2. Effect of chemicals on birds.                                                                    | 20   |
| 3. Effect of different conditions on stability of pesticides.                                       | 31   |
| 4. Pesticides residues.                                                                             | 36   |
| 5. Biochemical response used to chemicals.                                                          | 42   |
| MATERIALS AND METHODS.                                                                              | 48   |
| 1. Survey of noxious and beneficial birds.                                                          | 48   |
| 2. Toxicity and Repellency effects of the tested chemicals.                                         | 49   |
| 2.1. Tested compounds.                                                                              | 49   |
| 2.2. Tested animals.                                                                                | 50   |
| 2.3. Toxicity tests.                                                                                | 52   |
| 3. Stability of avicides.                                                                           | 55   |
| 4. Extraction of Cyanophos residues from bird blood samples.                                        | 58   |
| 5. The effect of Cyanophos and Lebaycide on the activity of some enzymes.                           | 60   |
| 6. Determination of total protein.                                                                  | 66   |
| RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.                                                                             | 69   |
| 1. Survey and population density of bird species.                                                   | 69   |
| 2. Toxicological effect of the tested chemicals on house sparrow and domestic pigeon in laboratory. | 75   |
| 2.1. Toxicity of tested chemicals on house sparrow and domestic pigeon.                             | 75   |

|                                                                                                | Page |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 2.2. Repellency effect of tested chemicals on house<br>sparrow and domestic pigeon.            | 85   |
| 2.3. Anaesthetic effect                                                                        | 97   |
| 3. Effect of certain environmental conditions on<br>the repellency of the tested insecticides. | 102  |
| 4. Cyanophos residues in bird and plant.                                                       | 111  |
| 5. Biochemical response of house sparrow birds<br>to pesticides.                               | 117  |
| SUMMARY.                                                                                       | 137  |
| REFERENCE S                                                                                    | 145  |
| ARABIC SUMMARY.                                                                                |      |

## LIST OF TABLES

| Table                                                                                                                                                       | Page |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Survey and identification of bird species at Nubaria area (6 October Farm) during 1990 season.                                                           | 72   |
| 2. Oral lethal effect of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose against house sparrow and pigeon.                                                        | 77   |
| 3. Dermal lethal effect of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose against house sparrow and pigeon.                                                      | 79   |
| 4. Toxic effect of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose to house sparrow ( <u>P. domesticus niloticus</u> ) and pigeon ( <u>C. livia domesticus</u> ). | 82   |
| 5. Repellent effect of Cyanophos compound against house sparrow ( <u>P. domesticus niloticus</u> ).                                                         | 86   |
| 6. Repellent effect of Lebaycide compound against house sparrow ( <u>P. domesticus niloticus</u> ).                                                         | 88   |
| 7. Repellent effect of Alpha-chloralose compound against house sparrow ( <u>P. domesticus niloticus</u> ).                                                  | 93   |
| 8. Repellency, lethal effect and hazard factor of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose to the house sparrow, <u>P. domesticus niloticus</u> .          | 94   |
| 9. Anaesthetic effect of Alpha-chloralose to the house sparrow ( <u>P. domesticus niloticus</u> ) and pigeon ( <u>C. livia domesticus</u> ).                | 98   |
| 10. Effect of weather conditions on the repellency potential of Cyanophos and Lebaycide coated on sorghum grains to house sparrow.                          | 103  |
| 11. Effect of soil conditions on the repellency potential of Cyanophos and Lebaycide coated on sorghum grains to house sparrow.                             | 105  |
| 12. Effect of washing conditions on the repellency potential of Cyanophos and Lebaycide coated on sorghum grains to house sparrow.                          | 108  |

## II

| Table                                                                                                                                                                           | Page |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 13. Residues and loss of active ingredient of Cyanophos in blood and in fruits of broad bean crop at different periods post-treatment.                                          | 113  |
| 14. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Cyanophos on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow.                                                    | 118  |
| 15. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Lebaycide on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow.                                                    | 119  |
| 16. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Cyanophos on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow brain.                                              | 122  |
| 17. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Cyanophos on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow kidney.                                             | 124  |
| 18. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Cyanophos on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow liver.                                              | 126  |
| 19. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Lebaycide on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow brain.                                              | 128  |
| 20. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Lebaycide on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow kidney.                                             | 130  |
| 21. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Lebaycide on the activity of certain enzymes in the house sparrow kidney.                                             | 131  |
| 22. Effect of 1/4 LD <sub>50</sub> oral administration of Cyanophos and Lebaycide on the activity of some enzymes in serum, liver, kidney and brain of the house sparrow birds. | 134  |

## LIST OF FIGURES

| No. | Page                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Paratrap.                                                                                                                                              |
| 2.  | Lethal effect of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose against house sparrow and pigeon.                                                           |
| 3.  | Lethal effect of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose against house sparrow and pigeon.                                                           |
| 4.  | Repellency potential and food consumption of Cyanophos.                                                                                                |
| 5.  | Repellency potential and food consumption of Lebaycide.                                                                                                |
| 6.  | Repellency potential and food consumption of Alpha-chloralose.                                                                                         |
| 7.  | Toxic effect of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose to house sparrow ( <u>P. domestitus niloticus</u> ) and pigeon ( <u>C. livia domestica</u> ) |
| 8.  | Repellent, lethal effect and hazard factor of Cyanophos, Lebaycide and Alpha-chloralose to <u>P. domestica</u> .                                       |
| 9.  | Anaesthetic effect of Alpha-chloralose to house sparrow.                                                                                               |
| 10. | Anaesthetic effect of Alpha-chloralose to pigeon.                                                                                                      |
| 11. | Effect of weather conditions on the repellency potential of Cyanophos and Lebaycide.                                                                   |
| 12. | Effect of soil conditions on the repellency potential of Cyanophos and Lebaycide.                                                                      |
| 13. | Effect of washing conditions on the repellency potential of Cyanophos and Lebaycide.                                                                   |
| 14. | Residues and loss of active ingredient of Cyanophos in blood of house sparrow.                                                                         |
| 15. | Residues and loss of active ingredient of Cyanophos in broad bean fruits.                                                                              |

# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

Birds damage thousands of tons of cereal grains worth million of pounds annually in Africa. Birds depredation in agricultural crops are not new but they are increasingly in conflict with man's interests. Losses of East Africa alone exceed U.S. \$ 15 M annually (Elliot and Beasley, 1979; Kitonyo and Allan, 1979; Bruggers, 1980).

In a country like Egypt, with a limited cultivated area, food insufficiency is the major problem that faces the overgrowing human population. The Egyptian Government started to solve this problem by the reclamation of desert lands

Recently in Egypt, the house sparrow, Passer domesticus niloticus is considered the most economic vertebrate pest in the agricultural land, particularly in the newly reclaimed areas.

El-Deeb (1991) recorded that the birds damage to repinning stage of wheat, horse beans, barley, sunflower and sorghum reached to 20.68, 2.76, 1.50, 21.03 and 35.60%, respectively and the highest birds damage was occurred at the newly reclaimed areas. Other bird species damage field crops, vegetables and fruits during the different stages of plant, such as crested lark, Galereda cristata and starling, Sturnus vulgaris.

The dangerous of these harmful bird species is due to their gregarious habits, large numbers and distribution pattern (Bruggers, 1980).

The successful protection of a crop from excessive loss to bird in any particular situation will depend, to a large extent, on the quality of the information available on that situation. Regular monitoring of such events as weather, cropping practice, natural vegetation cycles, noxious bird populations, and crop damage levels will usually enable bird damage control specialist to choose the method of protection best suited to the situation with a minimum of trial and error (Michal and Raymond, 1987).

To alleviate this problem, the efficacy of bird control techniques should be tested as a part of integrated crop protection (ICP) research programmes and conducted under different agroecosystems (Mark et al., 1989).

In this context, priority should be given to the methods which have the least impact on ecosystems, stability and natural balance (Paul et al., 1981).

The selection of a pesticide in concrete conditions depends on the specific composition of the pests,

the state and the density of their population. Avicides must be safe for the environment and for nontarget species. Also, pests of agricultural crops must be considered with a view to the harm they cause to crop. The harm depends on when the pests appear, their number, and the stage of development of the crop.

The present investigation includes the following: —

1. Ecological studies on noxious and beneficial birds at newly reclaimed area of El-Nubaria.
2. Toxic, anaesthetic and repelling effects of some chemicals on noxious (house sparrow) and beneficial (pigeon, Columba livia domestica) birds.
3. The stability of certain avicides coated on grains under different conditions using biological methods.
4. Avicide residues in bird blood and crops.
5. Biochemical response of house sparrow birds to the tested avicides. —

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### I. Ecology:

#### I.1. Survey of beneficial birds:

##### I.1.a. White wagtail, Motacilla alba:

Larmuth (1973) reported that, spring migration begins in February and continue to mid - April, large flocks of white wagtail were occasionally noted. One exceptional observation made from a ship of the Egyptian Mediterranean coast, was an estimated "one million" migrating white wagtails which passed on an evening in the last week of March, 1962. The next morning the ship's deck was littered with thousands of white wagtail birds.

Goodman et al. (1989) mentioned that, white wagtail abundant passage migrant and winter visitor throughout the country from early October to late April. In winter, these species were common throughout country, with small numbers present in remote desert areas with sparse vegetation or near human settlements. In Eastern Desert, small flocks are often found associated with domestic animal herds.

**I.1.b. Cattle egret, Egretta ibis:**  
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Raw (1921), Koeing (1928) and Meinertzhagen (1930) mentioned that, around the turn of the twentieth century cattle egret was thought to be almost extinct in Egypt due to want on hunting but after legal protection was enacted and enforced, they recovered in numbers. Also, they mentioned several large colonies in Southern Nile Delta, without giving exact localities.

Bulman and Beale (1944); Elliot and Monk (1952) and Tuck (1961) stated that, small numbers of cattle egret were regularly recorded throughout the year along the entire Red Sea coast, generally near human settlements.

Goodman et al. (1989) reported that, there were several cattle egret breeding colonies in the Southern Nile Delta, near Suez, in Fayium, and throughout the Nile Valley. In the past decade, this species has declined in numbers in the greater part of the Nile Delta, which appears to be the result of local extensive use of pesticides. However, the number of colonies in the Nile Valley and in the Fayium seems to have increased. Also, they reported that, the cattle egret was observed throughout the year in the Nile basin but was distinctly