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A *CHIRACANTHIUM* SPIDER BITE

Dorald M. Allred

ABSTRACT.— A bite by *Chiracanthium mildei* L. Koch is described.

In May 1979, Mr. Lee Carson of Provo, Utah, brought a spider to me which had bitten him on the right index finger. It was subsequently identified by Dr. Willis J. Gertsch as a female *Chiracanthium mildei* L. Koch.

Mr. Carson was in the process of placing a pair of rubbers over his shoes to work in his garden. The rubbers were kept in his closed garage, and had been worn a few days previously. As he inserted his fingers into one of the rubbers, he felt a sudden pain at the tip of his finger. Examination disclosed the spider with a web and cocoon in a rubber.

Within 3 to 4 seconds after the bite, the finger began to ache severely. The pain soon extended to his upper arm where it remained for 2 to 3 hours, although it was most concentrated in the finger. He described the sensation as a painful "tingling" similar to what one experiences when his elbow "crazy-bone" is bumped. No nausea, headache,

swelling, or numbness was experienced. No evidence of inflammation or necrosis occurred at the site of the bite, and the cheliceral punctures healed rapidly. Pain in the finger and arm disappeared after about 4 hours.

Dr. Gertsch kindly supplied information on the spider and its ecology. The species apparently was introduced into the United States, became a typical house spider in the New York and Boston area, and subsequently spread to other areas of the U.S. As early as 1930 Dr. Gertsch collected it at Salina, Utah. It is known from southern California, and Kaston (1972, "How to Know the Spiders, p. 221) indicated its distribution as New England, New York, New Jersey, Alabama, Missouri, and Utah. Gertsch further stated that the genus is reputed to have a venom of intermediate potency, and that of the European species is said to be next to their *Latrodectus* in severity.