

## **ISOLATION OF ENTERIC PATHOGENS FROM BATS IN TRINIDAD**

Authors: Adesiyun, Abiodun A., Stewart-Johnson, Alva, and Thompson, Nadin N.

Source: Journal of Wildlife Diseases, 45(4) : 952-961

Published By: Wildlife Disease Association

URL: <https://doi.org/10.7589/0090-3558-45.4.952>

---

BioOne Complete ([complete.BioOne.org](https://complete.BioOne.org)) is a full-text database of 200 subscribed and open-access titles in the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences published by nonprofit societies, associations, museums, institutions, and presses.

Your use of this PDF, the BioOne Complete website, and all posted and associated content indicates your acceptance of BioOne's Terms of Use, available at [www.bioone.org/terms-of-use](https://www.bioone.org/terms-of-use).

Usage of BioOne Complete content is strictly limited to personal, educational, and non - commercial use. Commercial inquiries or rights and permissions requests should be directed to the individual publisher as copyright holder.

---

BioOne sees sustainable scholarly publishing as an inherently collaborative enterprise connecting authors, nonprofit publishers, academic institutions, research libraries, and research funders in the common goal of maximizing access to critical research.

## ISOLATION OF ENTERIC PATHOGENS FROM BATS IN TRINIDAD

Abiodun A. Adesiyun,<sup>1,2</sup> Alva Stewart-Johnson,<sup>1</sup> and Nadin N. Thompson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

<sup>2</sup> Corresponding author (email: aadesiyun@sta.uwi.edu)

**ABSTRACT:** Bats are one of the most widely distributed mammals in the world, and they are reservoirs or carriers of several zoonoses. Bats were trapped in 27 geographic locations across Trinidad and Tobago, and following euthanasia, gastrointestinal tracts were aseptically removed. Contents were subjected to bacteriologic analysis to detect *Salmonella* spp., *Escherichia coli*, and *Campylobacter* spp. Isolates of *Salmonella* were serotyped, and *E. coli* isolates were screened for O157 strains and antimicrobial sensitivity to eight antimicrobial agents; phenotypic characteristics also were determined. Of 377 tested bats, representing 12 species, four bats (1.1%) were positive for *Salmonella* spp., 49 (13.0%) were positive for *E. coli*, and no bats were positive for *E. coli* O157 strain or *Campylobacter* spp. Isolated serotypes of *Salmonella* included Rubislaw and Molade, both from *Noctilio leporinus*, a fish-eating bat, Caracas recovered from *Molossus major*, and *Salmonella* Group I from *Molossus ater*, both insect-eating bats. Of the 49 isolates of *E. coli* tested, 40 (82%) exhibited resistance to one or more antimicrobial agents, and the prevalence of resistant strains was comparatively high to erythromycin (61%) and streptomycin (27%) but lower to gentamycin (0%) and sulphamethoxazole/trimethoprim (2%).

**Key words:** *Campylobacter* spp., enteric bacterial pathogens, *Escherichia coli*, Neotropic bats, *Salmonella*, Trinidad.

### INTRODUCTION

Bats and other wild animals have been implicated in the epidemiologic cycles of several emerging and re-emerging zoonoses (Meslin, 1997). Bats have also been documented as carriers of pathogenic agents such as vampire-borne rabies (Kobayashi et al., 2006), severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus, or SARS-like coronaviruses (Li et al., 2005), *Histoplasma capsulatum* (Brown, 1988) and leptospirosis (Smythe et al., 2002), making them important in the epidemiology of bacterial, viral, and mycotic zoonoses.

Bats have varied feeding habits and include species that feed, according to Calisher et al. (2006), on mammalian blood, fruit, insects, and fish. Other species feed on nectar (Voigt et al., 2003). Feeding habits can affect the types and distribution of bacteria in the bat's gastrointestinal tract (Anand and Sripathi, 2004).

*Salmonella* spp. have been isolated from bats in various countries, although frequency and serotypes vary, and all populations are not infected (Moreno et al., 1975; Everard et al., 1979; Cassel-Beraud

and Richard, 1988; Di Bella et al., 2003). Some serotypes recovered from bats are associated with human and livestock disease (Arata et al., 1968; Moreno et al., 1975; Cassel-Beraud and Richard, 1988). Other members of the family Enterobacteriaceae have been recovered from feces or intestinal contents of bats (Pinus and Müller, 1980; Sherley et al., 2000; Anand and Sripathi, 2004).

Resistance to antimicrobial agents among *E. coli* isolates from wildlife has been suggested to be acquired from the foods they consume and from the environment; resistance may also reflect the use of antimicrobials in humans, livestock, and pets (Levy et al., 1981; Rolland et al., 1985). Resistance to antimicrobial agents among *E. coli* strains from bats and other wildlife has been reported (Sherley et al., 2000; Costa et al., 2008). In Trinidad and Tobago, *E. coli* strains have been isolated from wildlife, and some have exhibited resistance to antimicrobial agents (Adesiyun and Downes, 1999; Gopee et al., 2000).

*Campylobacter* spp. have been isolated from free-flying and domesticated birds,

and they are generally considered important reservoirs (Waldenström et al., 2007; McCrea et al., 2008). Unlike free-flying birds, there is limited information on this pathogen in bats (Palmer et al., 1983).

Results from the last survey for bacteria in Trinidadian bats were published almost three decades ago (Everard et al., 1979). In the present study we determined the prevalence of *Salmonella* spp., *E. coli*, (including O157 strain), and *Campylobacter* spp. and characterized recovered *E. coli* strains for resistance to antimicrobial agents.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Between 13 November 2006 and 6 December 2007, bats were randomly captured from their natural habitats at 27 geographic locations across the island of Trinidad and from numerous sites by the Anti-Rabies Unit (ARU) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (Fig. 1). This study was part of a project to determine the frequency of isolation of *Leptospira* serovars from bats and thus required bat euthanasia; kidney tissue was required for *Leptospira* culture. Additional samples for this study were collected from bats (*Desmodus rotundus*) that were trapped and euthanized by the ARU as part of its eradication program for bovine rabies.

Bats were captured with mist nets (36×36 mm mesh) erected between 4 PM and 11 PM. Nets were continuously monitored, and bats were immediately removed and placed in wire mesh cages covered with dark material or cloth bags. Nets, on occasion, were erected between 4 and 7 AM when bats were returning to their roosts. Hand-held mesh nets also were used to capture bats in dwelling houses or other buildings. Live bats were transported in cages to the School of Veterinary Medicine at the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of the West Indies, where they were taxonomically classified based on morphology (Goodwin and Greenhall, 1961; Carter, 2004, unpubl. data). All collections were done under permits from the Wildlife section of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, and the study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of the West Indies.

Bats were euthanized with 2% Bomazine (Bomac Laboratory Limited, Manukau, Auckland, New Zealand) combined with 10% Ketamine (Dutch Farm Veterinary Pharma-

Figure 1. Sources of bats and numbers sampled from each geographic location

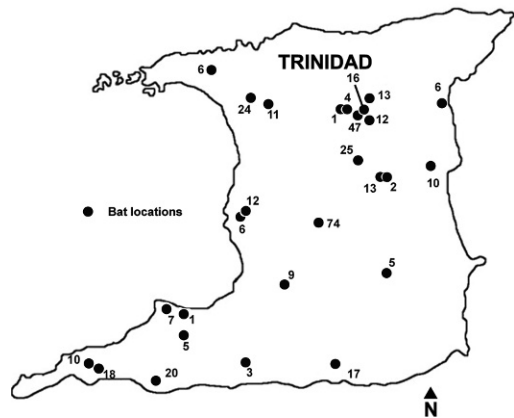


FIGURE 1. Sources of bats and number sampled from each geographic location.

ceuticals, Loosdrecht, the Netherlands) administered by intraperitoneal injection. The entire gastrointestinal tract was removed and macerated in sterile Petri dishes using a sterile pair of scissors and forceps. Macerated intestines and contents as well as swab samples were either plated on selective media or used to inoculate selective media.

To isolate *E. coli*, swabs samples (intestines or fecal contents) were inoculated on eosin methylene blue agar (Oxoid Ltd, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England) and incubated aerobically for 24 hr at 37 C. Plates were examined for the characteristic appearance of *E. coli* (metallic green sheen), and colonies that exhibited this phenotype were plated on blood agar and incubated aerobically at 37 C for 24 hr. Identification of *E. coli* was done using standard methods (Macfaddin, 1980). Isolates confirmed as *E. coli* were plated on blood agar and MacConkey agar and again incubated overnight at 37 C. On blood agar, phenotypic characteristics (hemolytic and mucoid colonies) were determined; the ability to ferment sorbitol was determined using sorbitol MacConkey media as described previously (March and Ratnam, 1986). Samples of *E. coli* from blood agar were subjected to the slide agglutination test using commercially available *E. coli* O157 antiserum (Oxoid) to determine *E. coli* O157 strain.

To detect *Salmonella* spp., macerated gastrointestinal walls and contents were divided into two portions; each portion was used to inoculate 9 ml of selenite cystine (SC) and tetrathionate (TT) broths. Both were incubated at 42 C and 37 C for 24 hr for selective

enrichment. The enrichment broths were subcultured onto xylose-lysine-desoxycholate, XLD (Oxoid Ltd., Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK), agar, and brilliant green agar (Oxoid), incubated aerobically at 37 C and examined after 24 hr of incubation. Suspect colonies of *Salmonella*, pink colonies with black centers (XLD) and pink colonies (BGA), were subcultured onto blood agar and incubated overnight at 37 C and subjected to biochemical tests (Macfaddin, 1980). *Salmonella* suspects, which gave typical biochemical reactions, were tested by slide agglutination with a commercially available kit *Salmonella* polyvalent antiserum (A-I & Vi; Difco, Detroit, Michigan, USA). Slide test-positive isolates were sent to the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC), Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the regional typing centre for *Salmonella* for confirmation and serotyping of isolates.

To culture for thermophilic *Campylobacter* spp., swabs of intestinal contents were plated for isolation on *Campylobacter* blood-free agar containing charcoal cefoperazone deoxycholate agar (CCDA, Oxoid) selective supplement. Inoculated plates were incubated at 42 C in 8–10% carbon dioxide in a CO<sub>2</sub> incubator (Forma Scientific, Marietta, Ohio, USA) for 48 hr to detect thermophilic *Campylobacter* as described (Lior, 1984; Adesiyun et al., 1992). Representative colonies on the blood-free agar, which were grayish with a running appearance and nontranslucent, were gram-stained; colonies that were gram-negative with characteristic “slender or seagull” morphology were classified as presumptive *Campylobacter* spp. and identified using standard procedure (Lior, 1984). The disc diffusion method was used to detect the antibiotic sensitivity of strains of *Salmonella* and *E. coli* to eight antimicrobial agents. The following antimicrobial agents and their concentrations (Oxoid) used were as follows: gentamycin (CN, 10 µg), sulphamethaxazole/trimethoprim (SXT 1.75 µg/23.25), amoxycillin (AML, 10 µg), kanamycin, (K, 30 µg), erythromycin (E 15 µg), nalixidic acid (NA, 10 µg), tetracycline (TE, 30 µg), and streptomycin (S, 10 µg). The susceptibility of the isolates to the various antimicrobial agents was read and compared to the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (NCCLS, 2002) chart for zones of resistance to various antimicrobial agents.

The frequency of isolation of the three pathogens and the frequency of resistance among *E. coli* isolates from the various species of bats were compared and subjected to the chi-squared test ( $\chi^2$ ) and the level of significance determined at an alpha level of 0.05.

## RESULTS

Bats were randomly sampled from known roosting sites in the northern ( $n=140$ ), central ( $n=142$ ), and southern ( $n=95$ ) parts of the island of Trinidad. Twelve species were represented, and the samples included 166 males and 197 females (Table 1). Mixed species were captured from 27 locations and from seven different types of roosting sites (houses, buildings, bunkers, trees, bridges, tunnels, and caves).

Of 377 tested bats, four (1.1%) were positive for *Salmonella* spp. Positive cultures originated from *Molossus major* and *Molossus ater*, both insect-feeding species, and *Noctilio leporinus*, a fish-eating species (Table 2). The prevalence of *E. coli* was 13.0% (49 of 377); 11 of 12 (92%) bat species tested were positive for this microorganism. All bats sampled were negative for thermophilic *Campylobacter* spp.

Characteristics of the isolated *Salmonella* spp. and *E. coli* are shown in Table 3. Four of the *Salmonella* isolates belonged to *Salmonella enterica* serovars Rubislaw and Molade isolated (from *Noctilio leporinus*); *Salmonella enterica* serovar Caracas and *Salmonella* Group I were isolated from *Molossus major* and *Molossus ater*, respectively. Eleven (22%) isolates of *E. coli* were hemolytic, with five (10%) and six (12%) displaying complete and partial hemolysis, respectively. Only one (2%) of 49 isolates of *E. coli* produced mucoid colonies on blood agar plates. Seven (14%) of the isolates were nonsorbitol fermenters, having been detected among *E. coli* isolates from four bat species. All isolates were negative for *E. coli* O157 strain.

The susceptibility of *E. coli* to antimicrobial agents is displayed in Table 4. Overall, 40 (82%) of 49 isolates tested were resistant to one or more antimicrobial agents. Resistance was frequently observed with erythromycin (E, 61%) and streptomycin (S, 27%) but infrequently observed with gentamycin (0%) and

TABLE 1. Sources and sexes of bats studied.

Species of bats	Geographic location <sup>a</sup>	Site	No. of bats sampled	No. (%) of bats that were:	
				Male	Female
<i>Artebius</i> sp.	Mt. Hope (24)	Building	39	9	30
	Curepe (11)	Tree			
	Manzanilla (3)	Tree			
	Moruga (1)	Tree			
<i>Carollia perspicillata</i>	Wallerfield Ice House (2)	Building	53	25	28
	Wallerfield Cold Storage (2)	Building			
	Tabaquite (1)	Tunnel			
	Cedros (18)	Bunker			
	Arima (2)	House			
	Fyzabad (2)	Tree			
	Princes Town (2)	Unknown			
	Green Hill Cedros (3)	Bunker			
	Manzanilla (1)	Unknown			
	St. Anns (6)	Unknown			
	Nestor Village, Tamana (2)	Bridge			
	Aripo (12)	Building			
<i>Desmodus rotundus</i>	Fyzabad (3)	Tree	41	12	29
	Rousillac (8)	Tree			
	Morne Diablo (3)	Tree			
	Green Hill Cedros (7)	Bunker			
	Erin (20)	Tree			
<i>Diaemus youngi</i>	Princes Town (7)	Unknown	7	4	3
<i>Glossophaga</i> sp.	Tabaquite (16)	Tunnel	30	14	16
	Couva (12)	House			
	Arima (2)	House			
<i>Molossus major</i>	Matura (1)	Building	28	4	24
	Talparo (25)	Building			
	Rio Claro (1)	House			
	Manzanilla (1)	Unknown			
<i>Molossus ater</i>	Matura (5)	Building	9	2	7
	Rio Claro (4)	House			
<i>Mormoops</i> sp.	Wallerfield Ice House (6)	Building	19	9	10
	Tamana (13)	Cave			
<i>Noctilio leporinus</i>	Couva (6)	Tree	11	5	6
	Manzanilla (5)	Unknown			
<i>Phyllostomus hastatus</i>	Wallerfield Ice House (25)	Building	28	27	1
	Wallerfield Cold Storage (2)	Building			
	Tabaquite (1)	Tunnel			
<i>Phyllostomus discolor</i>	Moruga (16)	Tree	16	10	6
<i>Pteronotus parnelli</i>	Wallerfield Ice House (14)	Building	82	45	37
	Wallerfield Cold Storage (12)	Building			
	Tabaquite (56)	Tunnel			
Unknown <sup>b</sup>	Valencia		14		
Total	Not applicable	Not applicable	377	166	197

<sup>a</sup> Number of bats sampled from each geographic location.<sup>b</sup> Information not provided on the locations and sites from where the bats were sampled by the Anti-Rabies Unit personnel.

sulphamethoxazole (S)/trimethoprim (T, 2%). Overall, 18 (37%) of 49 isolates displayed multiple resistance to antimicrobial agents. The differences in preva-

lence of resistance to various antimicrobial agents among *E. coli* isolates were statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2$ ). The predominant antimicrobial resistance pat-



TABLE 2. Prevalence of *Salmonella* spp., *Escherichia coli*, and *Campylobacter* spp.in bats.

Species of bats	Feeding habits	No. of bats	No. (%) positive for:		
			<i>Salmonella</i> spp.	<i>Escherichia coli</i>	<i>Campylobacter</i> spp.
<i>Artebius</i> sp.	Fruits	39	0 (0)	15 (38.5)	0 (0.0)
<i>Carollia perspicillata</i>	Fruits	53	0 (0)	1 (1.9)	0 (0.0)
<i>Desmodus rotundus</i>	Blood (mammals)	41	0 (0)	2 (4.9)	0 (0.0)
<i>Diaemus youngi</i>	Blood (prefer birds, mammals)	7	0 (0)	2 (28.6)	0 (0.0)
<i>Glossophaga</i> sp.	Nectar	30	0 (0)	3 (10.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Molossus major</i>	Insects	28	1 (3.6)	2 (7.1)	0 (0.0)
<i>Molossus ater</i>	Insects	9	1 (11.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Mormoops</i> sp.	Insects	19	0 (0)	3 (15.8)	0 (0.0)
<i>Noctilio leporinus</i>	Fish	11	2 (18.2)	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)
<i>Phyllostomus hastatus</i>	Omnivorous (fruits, insects, occasionally small mammals)	28	0 (0)	6 (21.4)	0 (0.0)
<i>Phyllostomus discolor</i>	Omnivorous (fruits, insects, occasionally small mammals)	16	0 (0)	4 (25.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Pteronotus parnelli</i>	Insects	82	0 (0)	7 (8.5)	0 (0.0)
Unknown		14	0 (0)	2 (14.3)	0 (0.0)
Total		377	4 (1.1)	49 (13.0)	0 (0.0)

terns were E (41%), S-E (14%), TE-S-E (8%), and TE-E (4%).

The four isolates of *Salmonella* had the following resistance patterns: Caracas (S-E), *Salmonella* Group I (S), Rubislaw (S-E), and Molade (S-E).

DISCUSSION

In the current study, 12 species of the 34 reported bat species in Trinidad and Tobago were sampled (Wright et al., 2002) from 27 geographic locations. Prevalence of *Salmonella* spp was found to be 1.1%, which is slightly higher than the 0% prevalence reported from bats in Grenada and Italy (Everard et al., 1979; Di Bella et al., 2003) and 0.2% found in Colombian bats (Arata et al., 1968). Higher prevalence estimates for *Salmonella* spp. in bats, ranging from 2.6% to 9.1% have been previously reported from other locations (Moreno et al., 1975; Cassel-Beraud et al., 1988).

Serotypes of *Salmonella* spp. reported from bats in other studies have been similar to those recovered from livestock and humans (Moreno et al., 1975; Cassel-Beraud et al., 1988; CAREC, 2004, 2005, 2006); this may indicate that bats can be

locally important in the epidemiology of *Salmonella* infections in human and domestic livestock. The *Salmonella* serotypes (Rubislaw, Molade and Caracas) reported from bats in our study have been recovered from human, food, and animal sources in Trinidad (CAREC, 2004, 2005, 2006).

Several studies have reported isolation of bacteria of the family Enterobacteriaceae from feces and intestinal contents from bats (Pinus and Müller, 1980; Di Bella et al., 2003). It has also been reported that some of these enteric bacteria from bats have atypical characteristics that are related to the types of foods they consume (Cassel-Beraud et al., 1989). In the current study, the prevalence of *E. coli* (13%) was considerably lower than the 29.5–78% reported in other studies (Moreno et al., 1975; Costa et al., 2008). The negative isolation results for *E. coli* O157 strain is consistent with previous negative results from wildlife (mammals [not including bats], birds, and reptiles) sampled in Trinidad. Consistent with this previous study (Adesiyun, 1999), nonsorbitol fermenting (NSF) *E. coli* were recovered (14%). Most strains of

TABLE 3. Characteristics of *Salmonella* and *Escherichia coli* isolates.

Salmonella			Escherichia coli						
Species of bats	Feeding habits	No. of bats	Serotype of Salmonella	No. of isolates	Hemolysis		Mucoid	NSF <sup>a</sup>	O157 strain <sup>b</sup>
					Complete	Partial			
Artibeus sp.	Fruits	39	NA <sup>c</sup>	15	2 (13.3)	1 (6.7)	0 (0.0)	1 (6.7)	0 (0.0)
Carollia perspicillata	Fruits	53	NA	1	0 (0.0)	1 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Desmodus rotundus	Blood (mammals)	41	NA	2	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Diarmus youngi	Blood (prefer birds, mammals)	7	NA	1	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Glossophaga sp.	Nectar	30	NA	3	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Molossus major	Insects	28	Caracas <sup>d</sup>	3	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (66.7)	0 (0.0)
Molossus ater	Insects	9	Group I <sup>d</sup>	0	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Mormoops sp.	Insects	19	NA	3	0 (0.0)	1 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Noctilio leporinus	Fish	11	Molade (1) <sup>e</sup> Rubislaw (1) <sup>e</sup>	2	0 (0.0)	1 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Phyllostomus hastatus	Omnivorous (fruits, insects, occasionally small mammals)	28	NA	6	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (16.7)	0 (0.0)
Phyllostomus discolor	Omnivorous (fruits, insects, occasionally small mammals)	16	NA	4	1 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Pteronotus parvelli	Insects	82	NA	7	1 (14.3)	1 (14.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (42.9)	0 (0.0)
Unknown		14	NA	2	1 (50.0)	1 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Total		377	NA	49	5 (10.2)	6 (12.2)	1 (2.0)	7 (14.3)	0 (0.0)

<sup>a</sup> NSF = Nonsoribitol fermenters.

<sup>b</sup> *E. coli* = O157 strain.

<sup>c</sup> NA = Not applicable.

<sup>d</sup> Isolates recovered from adult male bats.

<sup>e</sup> Isolates recovered from adult female bats.

TABLE 4. Prevalence of resistance among *E. coli* isolates.

Species of bats positive for <i>E. coli</i>	Location	No. of isolates tested	No. (%) resistant <sup>a</sup>	No. (%) of isolates resistant to:						
				E <sup>b</sup>	S	TE	K	AML	NA	SXT
<i>Artibeus</i> sp.	Curepe	4	3 (75.0)	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Phyllostomus discolor</i>	Mount Hope	11	9 (81.8)	8 (72.7)	4 (36.4)	1 (9.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (9.1)	0 (0.)
	Moruga	4	4 (100.0)	4 (100.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Desmodus rotundus</i>	La Brae	2	2 (100.0)	2 (100.0)	1 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Molossus major</i>	Tabaro	3	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Noctilio leporinus</i>	Couva	2	2 (100.0)	1 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Phyllostomus hastatus</i>	Wallerfield Ice House	6	5 (83.3)	5 (83.3)	3 (50.0)	2 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (16.6)	1 (16.6)	1 (16.6)
<i>Pteronotus parnellii</i>	Wallerfield Cold Storage	4	4 (100.0)	2 (50.0)	1 (25.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (50.0)	2 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	Tabaquite	3	3 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Mormoops</i> sp.	Wallerfield Ice House	3	2 (66.7)	2 (66.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	Tabaquite	3	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Glossophaga</i> sp.	Princes Town	1	1 (100.0)	1 (00.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Carollia perspicillata</i>	Princes Town	1	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	1 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
<i>Diaemus youngi</i>	Unknown	2	2 (100.0)	2 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Total		49	40 (81.6)	35 (71.4)	13 (26.5)	8 (16.3)	3 (6.1)	3 (6.1)	2 (4.1)	1 (2.0)

<sup>a</sup> Resistant to one or more of the eight antimicrobial agents tested.  
<sup>b</sup> E = erythromycin, S = streptomycin, TE = tetracycline, K = kanamycin, AML = amoxicillin, NA = nalidixic acid, SXT = sulphamethoxazole/trimethoprim.



*E. coli* O157 strain are nonsorbitol fermenters (March and Ratnam, 1986). The pathogenic *E. coli* O157 strain has been recovered from various sources in Trinidad, including domestic cattle, goats, sheep, and pigs (Adesiyun and Kaminjolo, 1994) and cows' feces and preprocessed milk (Adesiyun et al., 1997b).

In our study 10% of the *E. coli* strains were hemolytic, a phenotypic characteristic that has been linked to virulence in other animal species (Prader et al., 1991). The findings in the present study compare well with a published report by Moreno et al. (1975), who conducted a bacteriologic study on stools from 100 bats in Brazil and found that hemolytic and nonhemolytic *E. coli* were isolated most frequently (29.5%).

The prevalence of resistance (82%) to antimicrobial agents among *E. coli* strains in the current study is considerably higher than the 57.1% found in fruit-eating bats at the Emperor Valley Zoo in Trinidad (Gopee et al., 2000). The high prevalence of resistance is comparable to results from other studies in other countries (Sherley et al., 2000; Costa et al., 2008). It has also been reported that resistance to antimicrobial agents among wildlife species may vary locally and may be linked to the use of antibiotics in humans and animals (Rolland et al., 1985; Sherley et al., 2000).

The high prevalence of resistance to antimicrobial agents among bat isolates of *E. coli* detected in the current study is comparable to the frequency of resistance reported for *E. coli* isolates from pet dogs, 79.8% (Adesiyun et al., 1997a), and captive and free-ranging wildlife, 95.6–99.6% (Adesiyun and Downes, 1999; Gopee et al., 2000) but considerably lower than resistant rates reported from dairy cows (25.9%) (Adesiyun et al., 1997b) in Trinidad and Tobago. The exchange of *E. coli* strains among bats, livestock, and humans should not be ignored.

To date *Campylobacter* spp. have not been reported from bats (Adesiyun et al., 1998). Palmer et al. (1983) speculated that

*Campylobacter* spp. associated with human campylobacteriosis may have been due to the contamination of water by bird or bat feces, but to date a potential bat source has not been identified. *Campylobacter* spp. have been reported from other free-ranging wild mammals, farmed wildlife, free-flying birds, and racing pigeons in Trinidad. Negative results for *Campylobacter* spp. from bats may reflect a lack of exposure due to their diets, habitats, and limited contact with livestock and humans in Trinidad.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago kindly provided funds for a large project that included the study on the detection of zoonoses in bats. Special thanks to the workers in the Anti-Rabies Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources, K. Amour, and P. Seenath. The laboratory support of K. Williams and S. Singh is appreciated.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- ADESIYUN, A. A. 1999. Absence of *Escherichia coli* O157 in a survey of wildlife from Trinidad and Tobago. *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* 35: 115–120.
- , AND M. DOWNES, M. 1999. Prevalence of antimicrobial resistance and enteropathogenic serogroups in *Escherichia coli* isolates from wildlife in Trinidad and Tobago. *VeterinarSKI Archiv* 69: 335–347.
- , AND J. S. KAMINJOLO. 1994. Prevalence and epidemiology of selected enteric infections in livestock in Trinidad. *Preventive Veterinary Medicine* 19: 151–165.
- , ———, R. LOREGNARD, AND W. KITSON-PIGGOTT. 1992. *Campylobacter* infections in calves, piglets, lambs and kids in Trinidad. *British Veterinary Journal* 148: 547–556.
- , M. CAMPBELL, AND J. S. KAMINJOLO. 1997a. Prevalence of bacterial enteropathogens in pet dogs in Trinidad. *Journal of Veterinary Medicine B*. 44: 19–27.
- , L. A. WEBB, H. ROMAIN, AND J. S. KAMINJOLO. 1997b. Prevalence and characteristics of strains of *Escherichia coli* isolated from milk and faeces of cows on dairy farms in Trinidad. *Journal of Food Protection* 60: 1174–1181.
- , K. CAESAR, AND L. INDER. 1998. Prevalence of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* species in animals at Emperor Valley Zoo, Trinidad.

- Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine 29: 237–239.
- ANAND, A. A., AND K. SRIPATHI. 2004. Digestion of cellulose and xylan by symbiotic bacteria in the intestine of the Indian flying fox (*Pteropus giganteus*). Comparative Biochemistry and Physiology 139: 65–69.
- ARATA, A. A., J. B. VAUGHN, K. W. NEWELL, R. A. J. BARTH, AND M. GRACIAN. 1968. *Salmonella* and *Shigella* infections in bats in selected areas of Columbia. American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene 17: 92–95.
- BROWN, D. 1988. Cave-associated histoplasmosis: Trinidad. Journal of the American Medical Association 260: 2510..
- CALISHER, C. H. 2006. Recent recognition of bats as reservoir hosts of emerging viruses. Croatian Journal of Infection 26: 149–155.
- CARIBBEAN EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTER (CAREC). 2004. Surveillance report. CAREC, Port of Spain, Trinidad.
- . 2005. Surveillance report. CAREC, Port of Spain, Trinidad.
- . 2006. Surveillance report. CAREC, Port of Spain, Trinidad.
- CARTER, G. C. 2004. A field guide to the bats of Trinidad. Distributed to the Wildlife Section of the Forestry Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Trinidad. [http://publish.uwo.ca/~gcarter2/Trinidad\\_batkey\\_small.pdf](http://publish.uwo.ca/~gcarter2/Trinidad_batkey_small.pdf). Accessed 6 November.
- CASSEL-BERAUD, A. M., AND C. RICHARD. 1988. The aerobic intestinal flora of the Microchiropteran bat *Chaerephon pumila* in Madagascar. Bulletin of the Society for Pathology for Exotic Filiales 81: 806–810.
- , D. FONTENILLE, AND L. RABETAFIKA. 1989. Bacterial, viral and parasitological study of a population of *Chaerephon pumila* bats in Anjiro, Madagascar. Archives de Institut Pasteur Madagascar 1989: 233–239.
- COSTA, D., P. POETA, Y. SAENZ, L. VINUE, A. C. COELHO, M. MATOS, B. ROJO-BEZARES, J. RODRIGUES, AND C. TORRES. 2008. Mechanism of *Escherichia coli* isolates recovered from wild animals. Microbiological Drug Resistance 14: 71–77.
- DI BELLA, C., PIRAINO, C. S. CARACAPPA, L. FORNASARI, C. VIOLANI, AND B. ZAVA. 2003. Enteric microflora in Italian *Chiroptera*. Journal of Mt. Ecology 7: 221–224.
- EVERARD, C. O. R., B. TOTA, D. BASSETT, AND C. ALI. 1979. *Salmonella* in wildlife from Trinidad and Grenada, W. I. Journal of Wildlife Diseases 15: 213–219.
- GOODWIN, G. G., AND A. M. GREENHALL. 1961. A review of the bats of Trinidad and Tobago. Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History 122: 210–289.
- GOPEE, N. V., A. A. ADESIYUN, AND K. CAESAR. 2000. A longitudinal study of *Escherichia coli* strains isolated from captive mammals, birds and reptiles in Trinidad. Zoo and Wildlife Medicine 31: 353–360.
- KOBAYASHI, Y., A. OGAWA, G. SATO, T. SATO, T. ITOU, S. I. SAMARA, A. A. B. CARVALHO, D. P. NOCITI, F. H. ITO, AND T. SAKAI. 2006. Geographical distribution of vampire bat-related cattle rabies in Brazil. Journal of Veterinary Medical Sciences 68: 1097–1100.
- LEVY, S. B., R. C. CLOVES, AND E. L. KOENIG. 1981. Molecular biology, pathogenicity and ecology of bacterial plasmids. Plenum Publishing Corporation, New York, New York, 708 pp.
- LI, W., Z. SHI, M. YU, W. REN, C. SMITH, J. H. EPDTEIN, H. WANG, G. CRAMERI, Z. HU, H. ZHANG, J. ZHANG, J. MCEACHERN, H. FIELD, P. DASZAK, B. T. EATON, S. ZHANG, AND L. F. WANG. 2005. Bats are natural reservoirs of SARS-like coronaviruses. Science 310: 676–679.
- LIOR, H. 1984. New, extended biotyping scheme for *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Campylobacter coli* and *Campylobacter lariidis*. Journal of Clinical Microbiology 20: 636–640.
- MACFADDIN, J. F. 1980. Biochemical tests for identification of medical bacteria. Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore, Maryland, 527 pp.
- MARCH, S. B., AND S. RATNAM. 1986. Sorbitol-MacConkey agar medium for detection of *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 associated with hemorrhagic colitis. Journal of Clinical Microbiology 23: 869–872.
- MCCREA, B. A., K. H. TONOOKA, C. VAN WORTH, E. R. ATWILL, AND J. S. SCHRADER. 2008. Detection of *Campylobacter jejuni* from the skin of broiler chickens, ducks, squab, quail, and guinea fowl carcasses. Foodborne Pathogenic Diseases 5: 53–57.
- MESLIN, F. X. 1997. Global aspects of emerging and potential zoonoses: A WHO perspective. Emerging Infectious Diseases 3: 223–228.
- MORENO, G., C. C. A. LOPES, E. SEABRA, C. PAVAN, AND A. CORRÊA. 1975. Bacteriological study of the intestinal flora of bats (*Desmodus rotundus*). Arquivos do Instituto Biológico (São Paulo) 42: 229–232.
- NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CLINICAL LABORATORY STANDARDS (NCCLS). 2002. Performance standards for antimicrobial discs and dilution susceptibility for bacteria isolated from animals: Approved Standards, 2nd Edition, Volume 22. Wayne, Pennsylvania, pp. 1–52.
- PALMER, S. R., R. R. GULLY, J. M. WHITE, A. D. PEARSON, W. G. SUCKLING, D. M. JONES, J. C. RAWES, AND J. L. PENNER. 1983. Water-borne outbreak of campylobacter gastroenteritis. Lancet 1: 287–290.
- PINUS, M., AND H. E. MÜLLER. 1980. Enterobacteria of bats (*Chiroptera*). Zentralblatt Bakteriologie A 247: 315–322.

- PRADER, J., G. BALJER, J. DERYCLE, H. STEINRUCK, S. ZIMMERMANN, R. STEPHEN, AND L. BEUTIN. 1991. Characteristics of alpha-haemolytic strains of *Escherichia coli* isolates from dogs with gastroenteritis. *Veterinary Microbiology* 29: 59–73.
- ROLLAND, R. M., G. HANSFATER, B. MARSHALL, AND S. D. LEVY. 1985. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria in wild primates: Increased prevalence in baboons feeding on human refuse. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 49: 791–794.
- SHERLEY, M., D. M. GORDON, AND P. J. COLLIGNON. 2000. Variations in antibiotic resistance profile in Enterobacteriaceae isolated from wild Australian mammals. *Environmental Microbiology* 2: 620–631.
- SMYTHE, L. D., H. E. FIELD, L. J. BARNETT, C. S. SMITH, M. F. DOHNT, M. L. SYMONDS, M. R. MOORE, AND P. F. ROLFE. 2002. Leptospirosis antibodies in flying foxes in Australia. *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* 38: 182–186.
- VOIGT, C. C., F. MATT, R. MICHENER, AND T. H. KUNZ. 2003. Low turnover rates of carbon isotopes in tissues of two nectar-feeding bat species. *Journal of Experimental Biology* 206: 1419–1427.
- WALDENSTRÖM, J., S. L. ON, R. OTTVALL, D. HASSELQUIST, AND B. OLSEN. 2007. Species diversity of campylobacteria in a wild bird community in Sweden. *Journal of Applied Microbiology* 102: 424–432.
- WRIGHT, A., J. RAMPERSAD, J. RYAN, AND D. AMMONS. 2002. Molecular characterization of rabies virus isolates from Trinidad. *Veterinary Microbiology* 87: 95–102.

*Received for publication 16 April 2008.*