RICKETTSIA SP. CLOSELY RELATED TO *RICKETTSIA RAOULTII* (RICKETTSIALES: RICKETTSIACEAE) IN AN *AMBLYOMMA HELVOLUM* (ACARINA: IXODIDAE) TICK FROM A *VARANUS SALVATOR* (SQUAMATA: VARANIDAE) IN THAILAND

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Abstract

An engorged female *Amblyomma helvolum* Koch tick was removed from an adult *Varanus salvator* Laurenti lizard during field collection in Thailand. After using polymerase chain reaction to amplify three genes (16S rDNA, *gltA*, and *OmpA*), we discovered the presence of a *Rickettsia* sp. of the Spotted Fever Group. Phylogenetic analysis revealed that this *Rickettsia* sp. is closely related to *Rickettsia raoultii* Mediannikov. Therefore, we report herein for the first time the detection of a novel Spotted Fever Group *Rickettsia* in an *Amblyomma helvolum* from a *Varanus salvator* in Thailand.

Journal of Medical Entomology. 2013 Jan;50(1):217-20.