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# Determination of Organochlorine Pesticide Levels in *Spiza Amerianac*

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Poster Presentation P50

**DETERMINATION OF ORGANOCHLORINE PESTICIDE  
LEVELS IN *SPIZA AMERICANAC***

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The Dickcissel, *Spiza americana*, nests locally in the Midwestern United States and in parts of Canada. During the winter months, these birds migrate south into specific sites in the central plains of Venezuela. While in Venezuela Dickcissels feed on grain and, in an effort to reduce the impact of Dickcissels on their fields, Venezuelan farmers have been observed spraying Dickcissel roosting sites with pesticides. The purpose of this study was to document and quantify organochlorine (OC) pesticides (e.g. DDT) and metabolite levels using gas chromatography in Dickcissels collected from Venezuela during February and March, 2000. Four OC compounds (p,p'-DDE, DDT,  $\gamma$ -BHC, and Endosulfan II) were detected in the ng/g range in eight of 29 (28%) Dickcissels. The most frequently detected compound was p,p'-DDE, which was present in six birds (mean level = 16.99 ng/g). The maximum level of any OC compound was 78.33 ng/g DDT in one Dickcissel. These findings suggest that while OC contamination is not widespread among Dickcissels, some individuals are still exposed to these compounds. Future studies should document the presence of other classes of pesticides (e.g. organophosphorous pesticides) in this species.