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Seasonal and nocturnal domiciliary human landing/biting behaviour of *Lutzomyia* (*Lutzomyia*) *evansi* and *Lutzomyia* (*Psychodopygus*) *panamensis* (Diptera; Psychodidae) in a periurban area of a city on the Caribbean coast of eastern Venezuela (Barcelona; Anzoátegui State)

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Abstract

In recent years, in addition to American cutaneous leishmaniasis (ACL), a significant number of cases of American visceral leishmaniasis (AVL) have been reported in periurban areas of Barcelona city (Anzoátegui State, Venezuela). We studied the bionomics of *Lutzomyia* (*Lutzomyia*) *evansi* and *Lutzomyia* (*Psychodopygus*) *panamensis*, possible vectors of AVL and ACL, respectively, in El Rincón, a periurban village of that city. To evaluate the seasonal domiciliary landing/biting activity of sandflies on human bait, a house was chosen in El Rincón. Landing catches were carried out between 18:00 and 06:00, once a month for a year. The results show the presence of 2 species, *Lu. (Lu.) evansi* (89.9%) and *Lu. (Psy.) panamensis* (10.1%). *Lu. evansi* was most abundant in the months of October and July, associated with the bimodal cycle of annual rainfall in the area. Maximum landing/biting activity of *Lu. evansi* was observed at 24:00 and 03:00. These findings suggest that at this time of the year and at these hours there is heightened risk of the transmission of AVL. *Lu. panamensis* monthly abundance also shows a direct association with rainfall and maximum landing/biting activity was observed between 02:00 and 03:00. The lower domiciliary abundance of *Lu. panamensis* suggests its greater importance in the extradomiciliary transmission of ACL.

Keywords: [visceral leishmaniasis](#), [vectors](#), [Lutzomyia evansi](#), [bionomics](#), [landing/biting activity](#), [phlebotomine sandflies](#)

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