Description of the Egg Sac of *Mimetus epeiroides* (Araneae: Mimetidae) and Egg Parasitism by *Baeus* sp. (Hymenoptera: Scelionidae)

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Members of the family Mimetidae are specialized spider predators which have earned their appellations of “pirate” and “assassin” spiders. Although some may feed upon insect prey captured by other spiders and, rarely, on nonsnared insects, mimetids routinely invade spider webs, especially those of comb-footed (Theridiidae) and orb weaving spiders (Araneidae), and prey upon the host (Cutler, 1972; Gertsch, 1979; Jackson and Whitehouse, 1986). They possess a unique set of long macrosetae on the prolateral surfaces of the metatarsi and tibiae of the first two pairs of legs (Heimer, 1986; Platnick and Shadah, 1993). In addition to forming a trapping basket in drawing the prey’s leg to the chelicerae, these macrosetae may have a tactile sensory function (Cutler, Guarisco, and Mott, 1999). Pirate spiders are not usually encountered and little is known concerning their natural history.

*Mimetus epeiroides* Emerton (Araneae: Mimetidae) is a light-colored species that occurs in scattered localities throughout the eastern United States, southeastern Canada, and Utah. There are no publications on the biology of this species except for the habitat notes on collection labels (Mott, 1989). The present note describes the egg sac of *M. epeiroides* and an incident of egg parasitism by a member of the scelionid wasp genus *Baeus* sp.

During a field trip of the 21st Annual Meeting of the American Arachnological Society at Dickinson State University, Dickinson, in southwestern North Dakota, four mimetid egg sacs were collected from the undersides of rocks in short grass prairie in the vicinity of Medora, Billings County, ND on 22 July 1997. The egg sacs were spherical, bright orange, 5 to 6 mm in diameter and appeared identical to the egg sacs of *Mimetus puritanus* Chamberlin (Guarisco and Mott, 1990). During early August, tiny, parasitic wasps, later identified as *Baeus* sp., emerged from all four egg sacs. Luckily, one egg sac produced eight live spiderlings in addition to fourteen wasps. One was reared successfully to adulthood and was identified later as *M. epeiroides*. Because the egg sacs of *M. epeiroides*, *M. puritanus*, and *M. hesperus* Chamberlin (Icenogle, 1972) are virtually indistinguishable from one another, the identity of the three other parasitized egg sacs cannot be determined.

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