

## BOOK REVIEW

**A. Jones, R.A. Bray, D.I. Gibson (Eds.): Keys to the Trematoda. Volume 2.** CABI Publishing, Wallingford & The Natural History Museum, London, UK, 2005. ISBN 0-85199-547-0, hardback, 768 pp., 774 Figs. Price GBP 150.00, USD 275.00.

The trematodes are one of the most diverse groups of Platyhelminthes. They are often studied as experimental model organisms, but also their assemblages in different ecosystems are of interest to parasitologists. Since Skrjabin's monographs and Yamaguti's Synopsis (1971) are outdated, the planned series of three volumes of "Keys to the Trematoda" completely fits the strong need of updated guidelines for trematode systematics. The present monograph is the second part of the series, of which the first one was published in the early 2002. Again three taxonomists from the Natural History Museum in London took the charge of this volume. Leading specialists in the field of trematode taxonomy from Australia (4 authors), Brazil (1), Bulgaria (2), India (1), UK (3) and USA (6) were invited to contribute to the chapters.

Volume 2 deals with systematics and identification of trematodes of the order Echinostomida and a part of the order Plagiorchiida. Divided into 54 chapters the book covers nine trematode superfamilies – the Echinostomatoidea (A. Kostadinova & A. Jones), Haploporoidea (A. Jones), Haplospinoidea (R. Madhavi), Heronimoidea (A. Jones), Microscaphidioidea (A. Jones & D. Blair), Paramphistomoidea (A. Jones), Pronocephaloidea (D.P. Barton & D. Blair), Allocreadoidea (T.H. Cribb) and Lepocreadoidea (R.A. Bray).

The editors attempted to present the current state of knowledge, therefore the most recent findings also from molecular analyses (Cribb et al. 2001, 2003, Olson et al. 2003) are included and discussed in "Introduction and Key to Superfamilies". However, the authors admit, when there was no congruence between morphological classification and molecular data, morphology was preferred. For ease of identification some changes proposed by Cribb et al. (2001, 2003) and Olson et al. (2003) were not adopted in this book and the classification differs from that recently suggested in their papers.

The monograph, as stated in the title, includes keys to superfamilies, families, subfamilies and genera of Trematoda. Each genus is briefly characterised including its diagnosis, definitive hosts, geographical range, type-species and, when possible, the life-cycle data. No taxa higher than superfamilies were utilised; as in Volume 1 the superfamily is treated as the main unit. A cumulative key of all superfamilies will appear in Volume 3.

All chapters have an introduction with an outline of the history of the respective taxon and the recent changes within it; in some chapters also guidelines for important characters are included (Echinostomatidae, A. Kostadinova; Opencolidae, T.H. Cribb) and suggestions for proper fixation and handling of material (Haploporidae, R.M. Overstreet & S.S. Curran). The text is clear and concise, based not only on a review of literature but mainly on critical evaluation of material of type-species from collections in museums including many original drawings of good quality.

Because of the clear structure of the book and a simple key, it is an easy-to-use manual also for non-specialists in trematode taxonomy and students. Although the identification characters utilised by the authors and the style of the drawings differ in each chapter, and the user should read the introduction to each part carefully, it does not decrease the quality of the book. However, it is a pity that not all authors used the characteristics as introduced by A. Kostadinova (Echinostomatidae, Cathaemasiidae, Psilostomidae), which seem the most precise.

As in Volume 1 also in this monograph the authors had to deal with huge families with many genera (Echinostomatidae, Haploporidae, Cladorchiidae, Opencolidae and Lepocreadidae) on one side and numerous small groups often containing only one genus (Calycodidae, Heronimidae, Balanorchidae, Gorgocephalidae) on the other side. In both cases they were processed in a careful and responsible way.

Nevertheless, it is a pity that no checklist of species of each genus and no references as in Yamaguti (1971) were included to help the users in further studies at species level. On the other hand, since many genera have to be revised, the preparation of such a compilation would be much more time consuming and monographs dealing with single superfamilies would be a better place. Therefore the book should be considered as the essential base for any further specific studies.

The monograph is a necessary, updated identification tool and should be used by everyone working in the field of systematics of adult trematodes and not only by specialists, but also by young helminthologists, parasitologists working in the field of parasite ecology and behaviour, veterinarians and physicians, to avoid further potential mistakes in taxonomy when using old literature.

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