

FINDING OF HAEMAPHYSALIS ERINACEI ERINACEI PAVESI, 1884 ON BIRDS IN YUGOSLAVIA

During the investigations of tick fauna of Yugoslavia three specimens have been collected from birds and identified as *Haemaphysalis erinacei erinacei* Pavese, 1884. They are one nymph from *Apus melba* L., Dubrovnik, 10. 8. 1964 (leg. A. Lesinger), and two males from either *Merops apiaster* L., Čapljina, 14. 6. 1958 or *Grus grus* (L.), Čapljina, 29. 3. 1958 (leg. ing. J. Jošt).

Various authors mention the presence of this subspecies—sometimes under different names—from north African (Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt) and south European countries (Spain, Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria). The two other subspecies, *H. erinacei taurica* Pospelova—Shtrom, 1946 and *H. erinacei turanica* Pospelova—Shtrom, 1946 are distributed from the Near East to Central Asia.

According to Morel (Les tiques d'Afrique et du bassin méditerranéen, MS not published) *H. e. erinacei* has been reported from Yugoslavia by Schulze (Sber. Ges. Naturf. Freunde Berlin 1—2: 61—66, 1918) as *H. numidiana*, by Drensky (Izv. Zool. Inst. BAN, Otd. Biol. Med. Nauk 4—5: 109—168, 1955) as *H. numidiana* from *Erinaceus europaeus*, Skopje, and by Oswald (Jugosl. Vet. Glasn. 18: 54—61, 1938; Parasitology 31: 271—280, 1939) as *H. leachi* or *H. leachi media* from *Canis familiaris* and *Vulpes vulpes*, Kr. Polanka.

H. e. erinacei is a parasite of mammals. Hedgehogs, carnivores and rodents are reported as hosts of this tick. Findings on birds are only exceptional. Therefore, our records are of interest and the bird species under consideration are new hosts for *H. e. erinacei*.

The Alpine swift is a common species in the town of Dubrovnik and its surroundings.

It nests on roofs, in the cracks of houses and mighty town walls, in cliffs of the littoral zone as well as in the limestone rocks of the 412 m high elevation of Srd which is the continental hinterland of Dubrovnik. The way of infestation of the swift is questionable, because the bird never touches the ground, feeds on insects caught on flight and in the same manner it collects the building material for its nests.

The second locality, Čapljina, is a little town situated north of Metković in South Hercegovina in the lowland of the river Neretva, at some 30 km distance from the sea. Čapljina is not far from the famous Hut marsh, a well known hunting place of birds.

Both localities have a Mediterranean climate. Especially Dubrovnik is one of the warmest places in South Europe. The average temperature of the coldest month (February) is 4.6 °C, of the warmest (August) 26.2 °C. The majority of water precipitation (68 %) falls in the winter months, the summers are dry and warm. Due to this climate the subtropical luxuriant vegetation is typical for this territory (olive-trees, almond-trees, rosemary bushes, laurels, pine-trees, stone-pines, and cypresses). The character of distribution of *H. e. erinacei* in this area is to be established.

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