

FIRST RECORD OF SYNCUARIA DECORATA (CRAM, 1927) IN FULICA ATRA

Nematodes of the family Acuariidae are parasites with a wide range of hosts including terrestrial and water birds. The genus *Syncuaria* belongs to those parasitizing water birds. According to McDonald (Catalogue of helminths of waterfowl (Anatidae). Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Washington, 692 pp., 1969) *S. decorata* parasitizes birds of the orders Podicipediformes (genus *Podiceps*) and Anseriformes (*Aythya fuligula*). Sergeeva (Tr. GELAN 28: 38—46, 1978) reported this species as a characteristic parasite of Podicipediformes. It is distributed in the Palaearctic Region.

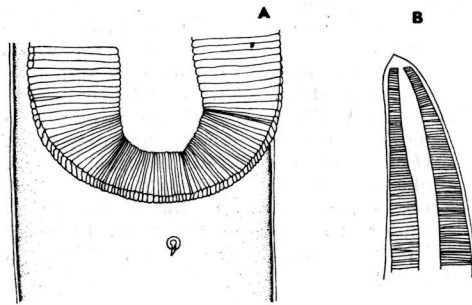


Fig. 1. *Syncuaria decorata* (male): A — bending of cuticular cordon, B — head end.

During the studies on bird nematodes collected by the workers of the Institute of Parasitology in South Bohemia, three specimens of nematodes were recovered from the stomach of *Fulica atra* female caught at Lomnice nad Lužnicí (District Jindřichův Hradec) on 21 March 1968. They were localized under the keratinized inner layer of gizzard. The nematodes were identified as *Amidostomum fulicae* (1 male and 1 female) and *Syncuaria decorata* (1 male).

Description of *Syncuaria decorata* (male): Body length 10.98¹, maximum width 0.31. Cuticle transversely striated, the distance between

striae being 0.037. Characteristic cordons developed on ventral and dorsal sides in anterior part of body, reaching up to 1.41 from head end of body and measuring 0.056 at the site of bending. Body width at this level 0.25. Simple spiny deirids situated 0.01 from cordon end. Tail alae 0.77 long and situated in posterior part of body. Stoma 0.35 long. Nerve ring 0.16 from head end. Anterior (muscular) part of oesophagus 0.70 long and 0.08 wide. Body width at level of its posterior portion 0.22. Glandular part of oesophagus 2.93 long and 0.14 wide. Body width at level of posterior end of oesophagus 0.30. Anal opening 0.20 from caudal end of body. Three pairs of preanal pedunculate papillae situated in front of anal opening level, the distance from anal opening being 0.16, 0.14 and 0.10, respectively. Six pairs of postanal pedunculate papillae, two of them situated immediately behind the level of anal opening, other two 0.06 and 0.08, respectively, from anal opening, and the remaining two immediately in front of tail end. Spicules of unequal length, right 0.18 and left 0.41 long.

The specimen found by us does not differ from those described by Kurashvili (Gel'minty okhotniche-promyslovykh ptits Gruzii v faunisticheskom i' ekologicheskom osveshchenii (Helminths of game birds of Georgia in the faunistic and ecologic views). Moskva, 434 pp., 1957 — in Russian) and recovered from their typical hosts, Podicipediformes. This is the first finding of *S. decorata* in a member of Ralliformes. *Fulica atra* is a new host for this nematode species. *S. decorata* has been recorded in Czechoslovakia only in members of the genus *Podiceps* (Baruš V., Zajíček D., Folia parasit. (Praha) 14: 73—85, 1967; Škarda J., Sb. VŠZ Brno (series B) 12: 269—293, 1964). Our finding in *F. atra* may be explained by the fact that Podicipediformes (i.e. typical hosts) and *F. atra* live in the same localities and a part of their food is identical, which enables the exchange of parasites between them.

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¹ All measurements are in mm.