

BOOK REVIEW

F. Moravec: Dracunculoid and Anguillicoloid Nematodes Parasitic in Vertebrates. *Academia, Praha, 2006. ISBN 80-200-1431-4, hardback, 636 pp. Price: CZK (Czech crowns) 695.00.*

The analysis and original synthesis of an important group of nematodes are presented in this volume by the world-renowned and respected parasitologist, Dr. František Moravec, D.Sc. In addition to a critical evaluation of the literature, the book is based in a large degree on the studies of the author, who had a chance to work with numerous materials of these parasites within several recent decades, due in part to broad international collaboration from many countries.

Parasitic nematodes (Nematoda) of the superfamilies Dracunculoidea and Anguilliculoidea (a separation of the Anguilliculoidea in the classification system, as newly proposed in this monograph, follows recent molecular studies) represent a very important group of parasites of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals, including man. Besides the famous Medina worm, *Dracunculus medinensis*, a parasite of humans in the tropical and subtropical regions that has been known since antiquity and still represents a serious health problem, there are many other species of these parasites that infect animals. They are often highly pathogenic and are known to be the causative agents of serious diseases of fish and other animals of economic importance, resulting sometimes in mass mortalities. Besides its unquestioned practical importance, the study of these nematodes is significant also from the viewpoint of the recognition of biodiversity in what nowadays are considered to be threatened unique ecosystems.

The monograph provides basic data on all hitherto known taxa of dracunculoid and anguillicoloid nematodes, enabling the exact species determination of these parasites. It summarises the present knowledge on their taxonomy, morphology, biology and ecology, provides keys to identifications, diagnoses of higher taxa and descriptions and illustrations of all species parasitic in vertebrates as adults or larvae. Data on their hosts, localisation, distribution and biology are also

given. Altogether, 171 species and subspecies of these nematodes belonging to 37 genera of nine families are dealt with in this way, including one species, *Philometroides similis*, newly established in this volume. The author himself or with co-authors described 38 species, i.e., 22% of the total species spectrum.

According to the author, the classification system of dracunculoids and anguillicoloids will require a future taxonomic revision based on detailed morphological (including SEM and TEM), life history and molecular studies of individual species. In this book, for the time being, the author uses the new classification system of these nematodes, containing the following main changes as compared to previous systems: (1) the family Guyanemidae is subdivided into new subfamilies Guyaneminae and Travassosneminae; (2) the Micropleuridae is subdivided into new subfamilies Skrjabillaninae and Esocineminae; (3) *Ichthyophilaria* is transferred from Philometridae to Guyanemidae (Travassosneminae); (4) *Kamgainema*, *Protenema*, *Philonema* and *Phlyctainophora*, originally listed either in Dracunculidae or Philometridae, are transferred to Micropleuridae; (5) the subgenus *Anguillicoloides* of the genus *Anguillicola* is raised to the rank of the genus. The book also includes a few brief general chapters. A host-parasite list is also provided.

I can state that this book is of an excellent quality in respect both to its scientific contents and form. As the first complex monograph devoted to this nematode group, it is irreplaceable, an essential overview for parasitologists, veterinarians, workers in fisheries, university students and generally oriented biologists. It will also be of interest to ichthyologists, herpetologists, museum curators and those engaged in nature conservation. With all my heart I thank and congratulate the author on this outstanding scientific work.

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