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Feather mites (Acariformes: Psoroptidia) from Colombia: Preliminary list with new records

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Abstract

A preliminary checklist of feather mites from Colombia is presented. The list was compiled from a survey of published literature, and from new records obtained by removing mites from live wild birds and dried museum skins. A total of 107 taxa of feather mites identified to the species level were recorded, 86 species from the literature and another 21 species reported here for the first time from Colombian birds. At the generic level, 52 taxa were identified, including 39 new records for the country. These feather mites are from 22 families, among which 13 are from the Analgoidea and 9 from the Pterolichoidea. The families with the most feather mite species known from Colombia are the Proctophylloidae and Pterolichidae with 22 and 23 species, respectively. Associations of feather mites with 192 bird species of 43 families in 20 orders were found. These birds represent only 10.2% of all bird species recorded in Colombia. The White-collared Swift, *Streptoprocne zonaris* (Shaw) was the bird with the most species of feather mites recorded (5 spp.). The number of Colombian birds with identified taxa of feather mites is very low given the rich avifauna of this country. Special attention should be given to the 73 endemic Colombian bird species of which only four have feather mite records.

Key words: Astigmata, Analgoidea, Pterolichoidea, biodiversity, taxonomy, host-symbiont relationships

Introduction

The Republic of Colombia is a country of 1.14 million km² in the northwestern corner of South America. With 1879 recorded species of birds, it has the most diverse avifauna of any country on Earth (Lepage 2011). There is a great deal of research on the ecology and systematics of Colombia's birds with many new publications every year (e.g. Estela *et al.* 2010; Cadena & Cuervo 2010; Donegan *et al.* 2011). In contrast, the published information on symbiotic astigmatan mites (Acari: Sarcoptiformes: Astigmatina) of Colombian birds is scanty and fragmentary, with many reports published in hard-to-access literature. Unlike for the feather mites of Brazil (Valim *et al.* 2011), there is no single source compiling what astigmatan mite taxa have been reported from birds in Colombia, on what birds they were found and in which publications they were recorded. Here we present a list of feather mites