



The acanthocephalan fauna of Iran, a check list

SAREH TAVAKOL¹, OMAR M. AMIN^{2,3}, WILMIEN J. LUUS-POWELL¹ & ALI HALAJIAN¹

¹Department of Biodiversity, University of Limpopo, Private Bag X1106, Sovenga 0727 Polokwane, South Africa.

E-mail: sareh_tav58@yahoo.com; wilmien.powell@ul.ac.za; ali_hal572002@yahoo.com

²Institute of Parasitic Diseases, 11445 E. Via Linda, 2-419, Scottsdale, AZ 85259, USA

³Corresponding author. E-mail: omaramin@aol.com

Abstract

The acanthocephalan fauna of Iran is reported for the first time since the report of *Pomphorhynchus perforator* (von Linstow, 1908) Meyer, 1932 in 1964. The knowledge of the acanthocephalan biodiversity of Iran, with parasite-host and host-parasite checklists, is presented. The species of Acanthocephala are presented in alphabetical order, followed by the species of hosts, localities and references. A total of 30 known species of Acanthocephala from 21 genera, 12 families and 7 orders are reported from 80 species of different vertebrates of Iran. One species, *Moniliformis moniliformis* (Bremser, 1811) Travassos, 1915 was recorded from humans. The group of hosts with the largest number of reported species of acanthocephalan is Actinopterygii (ray-finned fishes).

Key words: Acanthocephala, Iran, biodiversity, parasite/host list, host/parasite list

Introduction

It is amazing that acanthocephalan parasites of vertebrates in Iran have been known only within the last 50 years. The first reported species in Iran, *Pomphorhynchus perforator* (von Linstow, 1908) Meyer, 1932 was collected from *Silurus glanis* Linnaeus by Sefidkar-Langroudi (1964), who studied the helminth parasites of freshwater fishes in the northern part of Iran. Later, Ranjandish (1971) recorded acanthocephalans from different species of birds in Iran. Since then, other species of acanthocephalans have been reported as important helminth parasites, from several different animals. These were mainly from freshwater and marine fishes in natural water sources, mostly from the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Additional reports of acanthocephalans in fishes from the other coasts of the Persian Gulf include those of Amin *et al.* (1984), in Kuwait, and El-Naffar *et al.* (1992) and Kardousha (2005), in United Arab Emirates. A comprehensive classification system for the Acanthocephala was presented by Amin (1985; 1987), updated and augmented using available molecular taxonomic classifications (Amin 2013); this new checklist of species of acanthocephalans of Iran follows that classification. It includes parasite-host and host-parasite lists gathered from published records and unpublished reports. Acanthocephalans are linked with all vertebrate hosts, including humans.

Material and methods

The information in this study has been collected from published and unpublished reports and papers based on original records as well as our own research. The checklist follows the classification of Amin (2013). The species of acanthocephalans are presented in alphabetical order, followed by the species of hosts, localities and references (listed in chronological order). The checklist also includes a number of taxa that could be identified only to the level of genus. The authorities for each scientific name of the helminths follow the scientific names in the parasite/host list. The list also includes information on localities and the citation of the source of each report. The map of all provinces of Iran including the localities of the acanthocephalan species mentioned in current study, is provided