

***Ramazzottius bunikowskiae*, a new species of Tardigrada (Eutardigrada, Hypsibiidae) from Russia**

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Abstract

A new species, *Ramazzottius bunikowskiae* sp. nov. is described from a lichen sample collected in Russia. The new species is the most similar to *R. caucasicus* Biserov, and *R. tribulosus* Bertolani & Rebecchi in the shape of the egg processes but it differs from these species by some differences in the egg processes' appearance and measurements and also by measurements of some structures in adult specimens. We also provide first observations of peribuccal lobes, papillae and porous areas on the head (possibly external parts of chemoreceptors) in the genus *Ramazzottius*.

Key Words: *Ramazzottius bunikowskiae* sp. nov., new species, taxonomy, tundra, Russia, *R. caucasicus*, *R. tribulosus*

Introduction

Until present 22 species have been described in the genus *Ramazzottius* and in most of them the egg morphology is the key diagnostic character (Guidetti & Bertolani 2005, Biserov 1998). The genus *Ramazzottius* was described by Binda and Pilato in 1986 based on claw structure and the presence of apophyses for the insertion of the stylet muscles in the shape of blunt-hooks and asymmetrical in size and shape with respect to the frontal plane, as well as on presence of a pair of elliptical organs on head. The type species for this genus is *Ramazzottius oberhaeuseri* (Doyère, 1840) which was originally described as *Macrobotus* and is thought to be the most widespread species of the genus. However, many of the records of this species should be confirmed in light of descriptions of many new species in this genus in the last few years. Most of the species are very similar to each other and only a very careful comparison of eggs, dorsal sculpture and measurements