



Checklist of digenean parasites of birds from Argentina

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Abstract

Helminth parasites of birds have been studied in Argentina for almost one century. Survey work on this group of parasites is far from complete. Here we present a checklist that summarizes the diversity of digeneans of birds from Argentina, each account is based on a literature search and gives, for each digenean species, their hosts, site of infection, localities, life cycle if known, and collection number of types where they are housed. Moreover, it presents a list of bird hosts with their digenean parasites and a list of intermediate hosts. To date, 95 digenean species have been reported; of which 27 species (29%) were new to science. These reports include 2 species of Brachylaimoidea, 2 Clinostomoidea, 5 Cyclocoeloidea, 3 Dicrocoelioidea, 21 Diplostomoidea, 26 Echinostomatoidea, 1 Gymnophalloidea, 10 Microphalloidea, 12 Opisthorchioidea, 1 Paramphistomoidea, 8 Pronocephaloidea, 2 Schistosomatoidea and 1 Troglotrematoidea. A total of 60 wild and domestic species of birds have been reported as natural hosts of digeneans in Argentina and 5 species as experimental hosts.

Key words: Argentina, birds, checklist, Digenea

Introduction

Argentina possesses a high variety of ecosystems, including 18 different ecological regions. Within the aquatic ecosystemns, there are numerous rivers, lakes, lagoons and 3500 Km of coastline stretching along the Southwestern Atlantic. These ecosystems are inhabited by almost 1000 bird species, several of which are endemic (Di Giacomo, 2005).

Digeneans are the most abundant platyhelminths and as adults they inhabit almost all organs of birds. The first species of this group reported from Argentinean birds was *Prosthogonimus ovatus* (Rudolphi, 1803) found in eggs of *Gallus gallus domesticus* (L.) by Wolffhügel in 1909, followed by *Cyclocoelum* (*Cyclocoelum*) *mutabile* (Zeder, 1800) found in air sacs of *Fulica* sp. by Lahille in 1918. However, Lothar Szidat was largely responsible for inaugurating the study of helminths in Argentina. Between the 1950's and 1960's he published 11 papers about digeneans from birds. Since then many works have been done, however, most of the published literature has focused on two major areas, parasite life histories and taxonomy.

This checklist resumes the diversity of digenean of birds from Argentina as reported in the literature and includes information on each digenean species, their hosts, site of infection, localities, life cycle if known, and collection number of types where they are housed. Moreover, it presents a list of bird hosts with their digenean parasites and a list of intermediate hosts.