



Checklist of Acanthocephala associated with the fishes of Brazil

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Abstract

Twenty-three genera comprising thirty-four named and thirteen undetermined species of acanthocephalans are associated with one hundred and nineteen marine, brackish and freshwater fish species from Brazil. These are listed, with information on their hosts, habitat, distribution and records. A key to these parasites at the generic level is provided.

Key words: Acanthocephala, biodiversity, checklist, freshwater and marine fishes, key, Neotropics, Brazil

Introduction

Studies on the phylum Acanthocephala in Brazil began with the naturalist Johann Natterer, who arrived in Brazil on the 5th of November of 1817. He was among the royal attendants accompanying the Austrian Archduchess Leopoldina, who came to marry the future Emperor of Brazil, D. Pedro I (Straube, 2000). Natterer participated in several expeditions, crossing the country from Rio de Janeiro to the Amazon, during a period of 18 years (1817–1835). The material which he collected was brought to the Brazilian museum in Vienna (actually the Naturhistorische Museum). Among this material were helminth parasites, including some acanthocephalans which were later studied by Karl Moritz Diesing (1851, 1856), who described several species, two of which were subsequently redescribed by Kritscher (1957, 1976) based on the original material.

In 1913 the Brazilian researcher Lauro Travassos started his helminthological studies with work on acanthocephalans from birds, and in 1923 he described *Echinorhynchus jucundus* Travassos, 1923 from the fish *Piaractus brachypomus* (Cuvier, 1818). During this period, Travassos (1917, 1926) carried out a taxonomic review of the acanthocephalans from Brazil. Subsequently, our knowledge of the Brazilian acanthocephalan fauna was significantly increased by the work of Domingos Machado Filho, a student of Travassos, who described numerous new genera and species (Machado Filho, 1941, 1948, 1951, 1954, 1959a, b). Among the researchers who have contributed to this fauna in recent years, the works of Vernon Thatcher (1991, 2006) are the most notable, as he listed the parasite species, including acanthocephalans, from fishes in the Amazon River basin, with keys, descriptions and accounts of their biology.

Here we provide a checklist of the acanthocephalan species associated with marine and freshwater fishes from Brazil. The information is presented as parasite-host and host-parasite lists, with a key to the generic level. We have attempted to include information from all published reports and have added a small number of original records.