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## **Quill mites (Acari: Syringophilidae) of the Palaearctic region**

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## Table of contents

Abstract	3
Introduction	4
1. Historical review	4
2. Material and methods	9
3. External morphology	11
4. Systematics	33
4.1. Family Syringophilidae Lavoipierre	33
4.1.1. Subfamily Syringophilinae Lavoipierre	33
Genus <i>Syringophiloidus</i> Kethley	35
Genus <i>Betasyringophiloidus</i> <b>gen. nov.</b>	86
Genus <i>Aulobia</i> Kethley	98
Genus <i>Neoaulonastus</i> Skoracki	112
Genus <i>Krantziaulonastus</i> <b>gen. nov.</b>	128
Genus <i>Aulonastus</i> Kethley	136
Genus <i>Syringophilopsis</i> Kethley	154
Genus <i>Neosyringophilopsis</i> Skoracki and Sikora	205
Genus <i>Megasyringophilus</i> Fain, Bochkov and Mironov	221
Genus <i>Torotroglia</i> Kethley	226
Genus <i>Corvitorotroglus</i> Skoracki and Bochkov	252
Genus <i>Charadriphilus</i> Bochkov and Chystiakov	256
Genus <i>Pteroclidisyringophilus</i> <b>gen. nov.</b>	264
Genus <i>Chenophila</i> Kethley	267
Genus <i>Creagonycha</i> Kethley	268
Genus <i>Kethleyana</i> Kivganov	275
Genus <i>Selenonycha</i> Kethley	276
Genus <i>Stibarokris</i> Kethley	278
Genus <i>Philoxanthornea</i> Kethley	281
Genus <i>Niglarobia</i> Kethley	287
Genus <i>Paraniglarobia</i> <b>gen. nov.</b>	290
Genus <i>Peristerophila</i> Kethley	293
Genus <i>Meitingsunes</i> Glowska and Skoracki	301
Genus <i>Syringophilus</i> Heller	305
Genus <i>Galliphilopsis</i> Skoracki and Sikora	309
Genus <i>Mironovia</i> Chirov and Kravtsova	314
Genus <i>Bubophilus</i> Philips and Norton	318
Genus <i>Cuculisyringophilus</i> Skoracki	323
4.1.2. Subfamily Picobiinae Johnston and Kethley	326
Genus <i>Picobia</i> Haller	327
Genus <i>Columbiphilus</i> Kivganov and Sharafat	373
Genus <i>Neopicobia</i> <b>gen. nov.</b>	383
Genus <i>Rafapicobia</i> <b>gen. nov.</b>	391
5. Host-parasite relationships	396
5.1. Biology and transmission	396
5.2. Feeding	397
5.3. Habitat preference	397
5.4. Prevalence	399
5.5. Impact of quill mites on bird fitness	399
5.6. Hosts of quill mites	399
5.7. Host specificity on the generic and species level	401
6. Geographical distribution	403
Acknowledgements	405
References	405
Appendix. Host-parasite check-list	410

## Abstract

The fauna of quill mites of the family Syringophilidae (Acari: Prostigmata: Cheyletoidea) of the Palaearctic Region is comprehensively revised. The external morphology of adults and immature instars was studied in detail. All known 118 species grouped in 32 genera and 2 subfamilies occurring in the Palaearctic Region are examined and keyed. Critical reviews of host associations, occupying habitat, and distribution are given for all mite species. Six new genera are proposed,

4 in the subfamily Syringophilinae: *Betasyringophiloidus* **gen. nov.**, *Krantziaulonastus* **gen. nov.**, *Paraniglarobia* **gen. nov.**, *Pteroclidisyringophilus* **gen. nov.**; and 2 in the subfamily Picobiinae: *Neopicobia* **gen. nov.**, and *Rafapicobia* **gen. nov.** Twenty five new species are described in the subfamily Syringophilinae: *Aulobia leucostictus* **sp. nov.**, *Aulonastus lanius* **sp. nov.**, *A. loxius* **sp. nov.**, *A. anthus* **sp. nov.**, *A. fringillus* **sp. nov.**, *Betasyringophiloidus saxicolus* **sp. nov.**, *B. phoenicurus* **sp. nov.**, *Krantziaulonastus oryzivorus* **sp. nov.**, *K. lonchurus* **sp. nov.**, *Meitingsunes columbicus* **sp. nov.**, *Neoaulonastus remizus* **sp. nov.**, *N. caligatus* **sp. nov.**, *N. aegithalos* **sp. nov.**, *N. picidus* **sp. nov.**, *N. riparius* **sp. nov.**, *Selenonycha chradriiformicus* **sp. nov.**, *Syringophiloidus philomelosus* **sp. nov.**, *S. petronicus* **sp. nov.**, *S. parapresentalis* **sp. nov.**, *S. coccothraustes* **sp. nov.**, *Syringophilopsis idunae* **sp. nov.**, *S. muscicapus* **sp. nov.**, *S. passericus* **sp. nov.**, *S. nucifragus* **sp. nov.**, *Torotroglia pycnonotus* **sp. nov.** and five new species are described in the subfamily Picobiinae: *Picobia cetti* **sp. nov.**, *P. riparius* **sp. nov.**, *P. eremophila* **sp. nov.**, *P. galerida* **sp. nov.**, and *Rafapicobia zirnitra* **sp. nov.** The following new combinations are proposed: *Aulobia stachyris* (Bochkov *et al.*, 2000) **comb. nov.**, *Betasyringophiloidus motacillae* (Bochkov and Mironov, 1998) **comb. nov.**, *B. schoenichus* (Skoracki, 2002) **comb. nov.**, *Columbiphilus alectoris* (Fain *et al.*, 2000) **comb. nov.**, *Columbiphilus polonica* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2001) **comb. nov.**, *C. pteroclesi* (Skoracki and OConnor, 2010) **comb. nov.**, *Cuculisyringophilus chirovi* (Bochkov and Mironov, 1998) **comb. nov.**, *Krantziaulonastus buczekae* (Skoracki, 2002) **comb. nov.**, *Krantziaulonastus galbulicus* (Skoracki, 2008) **comb. nov.**, *Neoaulonastus bisetatus* (Fritsch, 1958) **comb. nov.**, *Neopicobia anthi* (Fritsch, 1958) **comb. nov.**, *Neopicobia cardinalis* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2010) **comb. nov.**, *N. carpodacus* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2010) **comb. nov.**, *N. ephianura* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2008) **comb. nov.**, *N. glossopsitta* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2008) **comb. nov.**, *N. locustella* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2004) **comb. nov.**, *N. modularis* (Skoracki and Magowski, 2001) **comb. nov.**, *N. pyrrholaemus* (Skoracki and Glowska, 2008) **comb. nov.**, *N. troglodytes* (Skoracki *et al.*, 2010) **comb. nov.**, *N. zumpti* (Lawrence, 1959) **comb. nov.**, *Paraniglarobia calidridis* (Bochkov and Mironov, 1998) **comb. nov.**, *Paraniglarobia skorackii* (Bochkov and Galloway, 2004) **comb. nov.**, *Pteroclidisyringophilus re* (Skoracki and OConnor, 2010) **comb. nov.** Three species are considered as *incertae sedis*: *Picobia brotogeris* Fain *et al.*, 2000, *P. leucophaeus* Skoracki *et al.*, 2010, *P. poicephali* Skoracki and Dabert, 2002. Keys to the syringophilid genera and all Palaearctic species are provided. Main aspects of host–parasite relationships are discussed.

**Key words:** Acari, Syringophilidae, quill mites, systematics, ectoparasites, Palaearctic region, birds

## Introduction

The family Syringophilidae is a group of parasitic, highly specialised mites inhabiting the feather quills. These mites are mono- or oligoxenous permanent parasites associated with birds of different orders throughout the World. To date this family includes more than 240 species of 52 genera described from all zoogeographical regions. This number of syringophilid species is only a small part of their actual biodiversity, because the wide spectrum of the avian hosts are still largely unexplored. The actual number of the extant syringophilid species is at least 5000 as it was estimated based on species numbers of their potential hosts (Johnston & Kethley 1973).

The Palaearctic fauna includes most recognized syringophilid species and is in needs of a comprehensive revision. In this work, I provide such revision of the Palaearctic syringophilids, including redescriptions of all species, keys and analysis of host-parasite relationships.

## 1. Historical review

According to the current phylogenetic conception (Bochkov 2002, 2008; Bochkov *et al.* 2008), the family Syringophilidae belongs to the superfamily Cheyletoidea (order Acariformes, suborder Trombidiformes, infraorder Prostigmata, parvorder Eleutherengona, sectio Raphignathae—according to the system by Mironov & Bochkov 2009). Different authors included in this superfamily up to eight families (Table 1). Phylogenetical hypothesis of the superfamily Cheyletoidea has been proposed by Bochkov (2002, 2008). According to this hypothesis, the superfamily Cheyletoidea includes five families and consists of two monophyletic lineages: (i) Cheyletidae–Syringophilidae and (ii) Harpirhynchidae (Demodicidae–Psorergatidae). The families Cheyletidae and Syringophilidae are closely related and, probably, diverged from a common cheyletoid-like ancestor, which had lived in bird's nests (Fain *et al.* 2000; Bochkov 2002, 2008).

All members of the superfamily Cheyletoidea, excluding the family Cheyletidae, are permanent and highly specialized parasites: Harpirhynchidae (ectoparasites of birds and snakes), Demodicidae and Psorergatidae (endoparasites of mammals); the family Cheyletidae includes both free-living predators and highly specialized ectoparasites of birds and mammals (Bochkov 2008).