



A new species and new host records of syringophilid mites (Acari: Syringophilidae) from passerines from Kenya

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Abstract

Syringophilopsis dicruri **sp. nov.** (Acari: Syringophilidae) ex *Dicrurus adsimilis* (Bechstein) (Passeriformes: Dicruridae) from Kenya is described. Five new hosts are recorded for 4 syringophilid species: *Chlorocichla flaviventris* (Smith) and *Andropadus latirostris* Strickland (Pycnonotidae) for *Syringophilopsis veselovsky* Skoracki *et al.*, 2009; *Ploceus vitellinus* Vieillot (Ploceidae) for *S. nitens* Skoracki and Dabert, 2001; *Acrocephalus palustris* (Bechstein) (Sylviidae) for *Neoaulonastus bisetatus* (Fritsch, 1958) and *Cyanomitra olivacea* (Smith) (Nectariniidae) for *Picobia oritis* Skoracki *et al.*, 2009. The syringophilid fauna of the Ethiopian region is summarized in table.

Key words: Acari, Syringophilidae, quill mites, Ethiopian region, Kenya

Introduction

Syringophilid mites (Acari: Syringophilidae) are parasites living within the bird quills. They feed on the fluids of the soft tissue of their hosts by piercing the quill wall with their styletiform chelicerae (Kethley 1971; Casto 1974). The world fauna of syringophilids currently comprises about 240 species assigned to 52 genera and two subfamilies described from all zoogeographical regions (Skoracki 2011). Fauna of the Ethiopian region was recently extensively investigated and 38 species grouped in 19 genera have been described till now (Table 1). Majority of above mentioned species are endemic, and only six species occur not only in the Ethiopian region: 1) *Bubophilus ascalaphus* Philips et Norton, *Syringophiloidus seiurus* (Clark) and *Neopicobia zumpti* (Lawrence) were recorded also in Nearctic; *Megasyringophilus aquilus* Skoracki *et al.* *Neoaulonastus bisetatus* (Fritsch), and *Syringophilopsis kirgizorum* Bochkov *et al.* were recorded also in Palaearctic.

Presently, in this region, quill mites have been reported from hosts belonging to 11 orders, 22 families, and 48 species.

In this paper, we provide description of one new species, *Syringophilopsis dicruri* **sp. nov.** and give records of five new hosts for 4 recognized syringophilid species. Additionally, whole syringophilid fauna of the Ethiopian region is summarized in Table 1.

Material and methods

Birds were trapped using mist nets from 20 November to 20 December 2010. All birds were trapped in six study locations of Kenya (East Africa): Kakamega Forest, Amboseli National Park, Chawia Forest Reserve, Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, Shimba Hills National Reserve and Tsavo West National Park. Feathers were completely removed from each specimen and examined under microscope at $\times 7$ –20 magnification. If quill mites were present, the