

## **ABROCOMAPHTHIRUS CHILENSIS (GOMEZ), NEW COMBINATION (PHTHIRAPTERA-ANOPLURA), AN ECTOPARASITE OF THE CHILEAN RODENT ABROCOMA BENNETTI (ABROCOMIDAE)**

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### **Summary :**

The same species of sucking louse (Phthiraptera-Anoplura) from the Chilean abrocomid rodent *Abrocoma bennetti* Waterhouse, 1837 was recently described as *Eulinognathus chilensis* Gomez, 1998 and as *Abrocomaphthirus hoplari* Durden & Webb, 1999. We discuss the nomenclature of this louse and confirm that its correct name is now *Abrocomaphthirus chilensis* (Gomez, 1998). After comparing type specimens designated from each description, we also document some morphological variation within this species with respect to the paratergal plate on abdominal segment 3 in the female which usually has two relatively long apical setae, but occasionally has only one.

**KEY WORDS :** *Abrocomaphthirus chilensis*, new combination, Chile, ectoparasite, *Abrocoma bennetti*.

**Résumé :** *ABROCOMAPHTHIRUS CHILENSIS* (GOMEZ), COMB. N. (PHTHIRAPTERA-ANOPLURA), ECTOPARASITE DU RONGEUR *ABROCOMA BENNETTI* (ABROCOMIDAE) DU CHILI

Une espèce de pou (Phthiraptera-Anoplura) trouvé sur le rongeur abrocomide *Abrocoma bennetti* Waterhouse, 1837 a été récemment décrite comme *Eulinognathus chilensis* Gomez, 1998 et comme *Abrocomaphthirus hoplari* Durden & Webb, 1999. Les auteurs discutent la nomenclature de ce pou et confirment que son nom correct est *Abrocomaphthirus chilensis* (Gomez, 1998). La comparaison des spécimens types de chaque description a conduit les auteurs à constater l'existence, chez la femelle, de quelques variations morphologiques intraspecificques concernant la plaque paratergale du segment abdominal 3, laquelle porte d'habitude deux soies distales relativement longues mais peut aussi n'en posséder qu'une seule.

**MOTS CLÉS :** *Abrocomaphthirus chilensis*, comb. n., Chili, ectoparasite, *Abrocoma bennetti*.

The same species of sucking louse was inadvertently described twice in the recent parasitological literature. In order to clarify the correct name that should now be applied to this louse, and to document morphological variation within this species, we present the following brief account.

The louse in question was first described as *Eulinognathus chilensis* Gomez, 1998 from a holotype female, an allotype male, and paratypes of all three nymphal instars recovered from *Abrocoma bennetti* Waterhouse, 1837 collected in Copiepo (= Copiapo) (27° 22' S, 70° 20' W), Chile (Gomez, 1998). Primary types from this description are in the collection of M.S. Gomez and will also be deposited in The Natural History Museum, London. Unaware of the Gomez (1998) publication, Durden & Webb (1999) described the same louse soon afterwards as *Abrocomaphthirus hoplari* Durden

& Webb, 1999 from a male holotype, a female allotype and a female paratype recovered from *A. bennetti* in Santiago Province, Chile (2.5 km north-east of Cerro Manquehue at coordinates 33° 20' S, 70° 33' 30" W). Durden & Webb (1999) erected a new genus for the new species and for the closely related *A. longus* (Werneck) which parasitises *Abrocoma cinerea* Thomas, 1919 in Peru. The rationale for describing a new genus to accommodate these two species of sucking lice was mainly based on the presence in them of five abdominal spiracles, rather than the six that characterise other members of the family Polyplacidae to which this louse belongs.

In comparing specimens from the two descriptions, we can confirm that they are conspecific. However, there are a few differences between the drawings presented by Gomez (1998) and Durden & Webb (1999), some of which can be attributed to the fact that specimens used in the two studies underwent different treatments before they were slide-mounted. Gomez (1998) slide-mounted specimens in Hoyer's medium directly from 70 % alcohol. However, Durden & Webb (1999), cleared specimens in 10 % potassium hydroxide, then transferred them through a series of ethanol rinses of ascending concentration up to 100 %, before further clearing in xylene and then cover-slipping in Canada

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balsam. Although the latter specimens are cleared to a much greater degree than the former ones, morphological structures are also relatively clear in the specimen's mounted in Hoyer's medium. Nevertheless, the apical paratergal lobes shown for both sexes in the Durden & Webb (1999) drawings are more difficult to distinguish in the specimens mounted in Hoyer's medium. Also, the arrangement of the dorsal and ventral abdominal plates and setae is less clear in the latter specimens (Gomez, 1998).

Re-examination of specimens from both descriptions has revealed one important area of morphological variation in this louse that should be documented. This concerns the setation of the paratergal plate on abdominal segment 3 of the female. Although the holotype male designated by Durden & Webb (1999) had two relatively long apical setae on this plate on each side, both of the female specimens they examined (the allotype and paratype) had only one apical seta on this plate on each side. However, Gomez (1998) clearly showed two apical setae on the paratergal plate on abdominal segment 3 of the female. After re-examining the specimens, we can confirm that these findings are correct and that the number of setae on this plate can be either one or two. In fact, two female specimens in the Gomez (1998) series possess two setae on this plate on one side and one seta on the corresponding plate on the other side.

The date of publication printed on the inside cover of the journal issue in which the Gomez (1998) paper was published is March 1998, and that of the Durden & Webb (1999) paper, is November 1999. Therefore, the Gomez (1998) description and specific epithet clearly have priority. However, because Durden & Webb (1999) erected a new genus to accommodate this louse and a closely related species, the correct name of this louse, according to the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, becomes *Abrocomaphthirus chilensis* (Gomez, 1998). At the time of writing, neither name or citation has been published in the Zoological Record.

## REFERENCES

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