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Northwest Coast of Costa Rica

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TWO NEW SPECIES OF TETRAHYLLIDEAN CESTODES IN
HIMANTURA PACIFICA (CHONDRICTHYES: MYLIOBATIFORMES:
DASYATIDIDAE) FROM THE NORTHWEST COAST OF COSTA RICA

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ABSTRACT: Two new species of tetraphyllidean cestodes inhabiting Himantura pacifica from the northwest coast of Costa Rica are apparently most closely related to species inhabiting Himantura schmardae from the Atlantic coast of Colombia. Acanthobothroides pacificus n. sp. differs from Acanthobothroides thorsoni, the only other species in the genus, primarily by having smaller lateral (98–123 μm rather than 168–198 μm long) and medial (handles 92–116 μm rather than 162–168 μm long) hooks, and more testes (up to 125 rather than up to 97) per proglottis. The generic diagnosis of Acanthobothroides is modified to include the presence of a small inner prong on the large medial biliary hooks. Rhinebothrium geminum n. sp. and Rhinebothrium magnipallium are the only 2 species in the genus possessing unusually long cirrus sacs, extending from the genital atrium all the way to the ovarian isthmus; R. geminum averages 12 (12–14) loculi per bothridium and 11 (9–12) testes, whereas R. magnipallium averages 17 (16–18) loculi and 14 (10–16) testes per proglottis.

The presence of sister species on each side of the Panama isthmus has been reported for octopods, sea urchins, pinnothroid crabs of the genus Dissodactylus, and atherinid fishes (Voight, 1988; Lessios, 1979; Griffith, 1987; White, 1986) among others. However, studies referring to species pairs on both side of the isthmus are scarce for helminths, restricted to Manter’s (1940) list of species pairs of digenetic trematodes inhabiting marine fishes. Brooks (1977) described 6 new species of tetraphyllidean cestodes inhabiting a species of marine stingray, Himantura schmardae (Werner), from the Caribbean coast of Colombia. The present paper describes 2 new species of tetraphyllideans inhabiting the putative sister species of H. schmardae, Himantura pacifica (Beebe and Tee-Van), from the Pacific coast of Costa Rica.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In June 1992, 1 specimen of Himantura pacifica (Beebe and Tee-Van) was captured at Playa Panama, Guanacaste Province, Costa Rica, using a beach seine. Worms were removed from the spiral valve, killed with hot tap water, transferred immediately to AFA for 24–48 hr, and then stored in 70% ethanol. Specimens were stained with Mayer’s hematoxylin and mounted in Canada balsam for examination as whole mounts. Measurements are in μm unless otherwise stated; for some traits, ranges are given, followed in parentheses by mean values ± 1 standard deviation and the sample size (n). Hook measurements follow the formula of Euzet (1956) modified as follows: For each parameter, mean value ± 1 standard deviation is given, followed in parentheses by its range. Figures were drawn with the aid of camera lucida using a BH-2 Olympus microscope. The tetralobed nature of the ovaries was confirmed from lateral views of unmouted specimens and from whole mounts because sufficient material for sectioning was not available. MNHG refers to the Museum of Natural History, Geneva, Switzerland; USNPC refers to the U.S. National Parasite Collection, Beltsville, Maryland; UNSMHWMIL refers to the University of Nebraska State Museum, Harold W. Manter Laboratory, Division of Parasitology, Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A.

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Figure 1. Acanthobothroides pacificus n. sp. and A. thorsoni. A. Scolex of A. pacificus n. sp. B. Medial and lateral hooks of A. pacificus n. sp. C. Medial hook of A. thorsoni (UNSMHWML no. 20259, paratype). D. Immature proglottis (dorsal lobe of ovary omitted) in A. pacificus n. sp. E. Mature proglottis with testes in A. pacificus n. sp. F. Terminal proglottis without testes but with sperm in vas deferens in A. pacificus n. sp.
Figure 2. *Rhinebothrium geminum* n. sp. A, Scolex. B, Terminal proglottis.
lecs comprising 4 triloculate bothridia each surmounted by an apical pad and sucker and armed with a pair of hooks. The lateral hook was similar in shape to those exhibited by species of Acanthobothrium. Van Beneden, 1849 and the medial hook described as having a single robust prong, thus distinct from other species of Acanthobothrium. Acanthobothroides Pacificus is highly similar to A. thorsoni. Our specimens are smaller (up to 122 mm long) than those of A. thorsoni (up to 400 mm long) and have fewer segments (approximately 400 rather than 700). Mature proglottides of A. thorsoni are longer (852–876) than those of A. pacificus (394–604). The bothridia are nearly the same length in both species, but they are wider in A. pacificus than in A. thorsoni; in addition, A. pacificus possesses relatively shorter medial loculi and relatively longer posterior loculi than A. thorsoni (the ratio of bothridial loculi lengths is 1:0.4:0.3 for A. pacificus and 1:0.5:0.2 for A. thorsoni). Acanthobothroides Pacificus has smaller bothridial hooks (lateral hook 98–123 μm long, handle of medial hook 92–116 μm long) than A. thorsoni (lateral hook 168–198 μm long, handle of medial hook 162–168 μm long). Alternatively, A. pacificus possesses slightly more testes per proglottis (averaging 104, with a maximum of 125) than A. thorsoni (averaging 92, with a maximum of 97). Finally, A. pacificus exhibits slightly smaller cirrus sacs (337–445 × 146–223) than A. thorsoni (415–504 × 180–240). Acanthobothroides Pacificus is anaplectic, as is A. thorsoni. Euzet (1994) incorrectly listed A. thorsoni as euaplectic.

The specimens of A. thorsoni collected by Brooks (1977) had broken hook tips on the prongs of the lateral hook, a condition originally attributed to rough handling during collection of specimens strongly attached to the spiral valve. Consequently, specimens of A. pacificus, which were also very firmly attached to the host intestine, were removed with great care. Despite gentle handling, the tips of the hook prongs for the lateral hooks were missing in our specimens of A. pacificus; thus, we think this may be a normal condition in species of Acanthobothroides. Furthermore, during our examination of the medial hooks of A. pacificus, we discovered a very small inner prong, also exhibiting a broken tip (Fig. 1B). Re-examination of the holotype (USNPC no. 73959) and 2 paratypes (UNSMHWML no. 20259) of A. thorsoni revealed a similar basal fragment of an inner prong on the medial hook (Fig. 1C).

We believe that the presence of an inner prong on the medial hook with a broken tip is also a normal condition in both A. thorsoni and A. pacificus. We propose therefore that the generic diagnosis of Acanthobothroides be emended to reflect the observation that the medial hook has a robust outer prong and a minute inner prong. In the absence of a phylogenetic analysis of Acanthobothrium and Acanthobothroides, we can only speculate that the minute inner prong is a vestigial trait indicating close relationship with Acanthobothrium. We believe that the massive size of the outer prong of the medial hook may exert enough force during attachment to the host intestine that the tips of the much more delicate prongs of the lateral hooks and of the inner prong of the medial hook may be broken.

Acanthobothroides Brooks, 1977

Emended diagnosis: Oochonbothridae. Scolex with four sessile, triloculate bothridia each with apical sucker and pad armed with a pair of dissimilar hooks: lateral hooks bifid with handle, medial hook has a robust outer prong and a minute inner prong. Genital pores marginal, irregularly alternating. Ovary bilobed in frontal view, X-shaped in cross section. Vitellaria follicular, in marginal area of proglottis. Parasites of elasmobranchs.

Rhinebothrium geminum n. sp.

(Fig. 2A–D)

Description (based on 16 specimens): Strobila acraspedota, anaplectic, 1.3–2.3 (1.7 ± 0.3; n = 14) mm long; composed of 7–11 (9 ± 1; n = 16) proglottides. Scolex composed of 4 pedicellated, bilobed, elongate bothridia; pedicels 62–126 (92.6; n = 20) long; bothridial pedicels 252–378 (331 ± 44; n = 20) long by 142–221 (178 ± 20; n = 11) wide divided transversally by 11–13 transverse septa forming 12–14 total loculi; median longitudinal septum absent. Cephalic peduncle 76–126 (107 ± 19; n = 14) mm long. Immature proglottides wider than long. Mature proglottides 528–782 (662 ± 67; n = 13) long by 102–159 (129 ± 19; n = 9) wide. Tests restricted posteriorly to cirrhus sac, 9–12 (11 ± 1; n = 9) in number, and 25–48 (33 ± 5; n = 35) in diameter. Cirrus sac extending posteriorly from mid-proglottis, 123–299 (198 ± 46; n = 14) long by 63–113 (73 ± 17; n = 9) wide, contained spined eversible cirrus. Vagina anterior to cirrus sac; vaginal sphincter a glandular thickening near genital pore. Genital pore 29–46% (37 ± 4; n = 12) of proglottis length from anterior end. Ovary V-shaped near posterior end of proglottis, lobes fused posteriorly, X-shaped in cross section, 195–378 (263 ± 54; n = 12) long by 60–94 (74 ± 11; n = 9) wide at isthmus. Ovarian lobes symmetrical, extending anteriorly to 1 ovariann length posterior to level of genital pore, terminating just anterior to posterior margin of cirrus sac. Vitelline follicles extending entire length of proglottis, sometimes confluent posterior to ovary, 13–32 (21 ± 5; n = 22) in diameter.

Taxonomic summary

Host: Himantura pacifica (Beebe and Tee-Van).

Site of infection: Spiral valve.

Locality: Playa Panama, Guanacaste, Costa Rica (10°15’N; 86°00’W).

Holotype: MNHG no. INV 20587.

Paratypes: MNHG no. INV 20588-9; UNSMHWML no. 38743.

Etymology: The specific epithet “geminum,” meaning twin, refers to the high degree of similarity and apparently close relationship between the new species and Rhinebothrium magniphallum Brooks, 1977, inhabiting H. schmardae from the Atlantic coast of Costa Rica.

Remarks

Rhinebothrium geminum n. sp. is a member of a phenetic grouping of 6 species of Rhinebothrium Linton, 1890 with bothridia lacking constrictions or “hinges” and divided into loculi by transverse septa only. This collection includes Rhinebothrium minimum (Van Beneden, 1850) Euzet, 1956 in Dasylus pastinaca (L.) from France, Rhinebothrium shiplayi Southwell, 1911 in Trygon (= Dasylipsis kahli) (Müller and Henle) from SRI Lanka and Dasylipsis akajie (Müller & Henle) from Japan, Rhinebothrium palombii Baer, 1948 in Dasylipsis violacea (Bonaparte) from the Mediterranean Sea, Rhinebothrium rankini Baer, 1948 in Dasylipsis centroura (Mitchill) from the Atlantic coast of the United States, Rhinebothrium taeniuri Ramadan, 1984 in Taeniura lymma (Forßkål) from the Red Sea, and R. magniphallum Brooks, 1977 in H. schmardae from the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica. Of these, only R. magniphallum shares with R. geminum the presumably apomorphic trait of a relatively large cirrus sac compared with other species of Rhinebothrium. In most species of Rhinebothrium, the genital pore is close to the level of the anterior extent of the ovary, and the cirrus sac fills the space between the genital pore and anterior extent of the ovary, which are close together. In R. geminum and R. magniphallum, the genital pore is separated from the anterior arms of the ovary by approximately 1 ovariann length, and the cirrus sac is enlarged enough to fill the available space between the genital pore and anterior extent of the ovary (Fig. 2B). Rhinebothrium geminum differs from R. magniphallum by having a smaller number of bothridial loculi (12–14) and smaller number of testes per proglottis (8–12) than R. magniphallum (16–18 loculi, 10–15 testes). Of the other species listed above, R. minimum (4–5 testes, 11 loculi) and R. taeniuri (4–8 testes, 9–11 loculi) have fewer testes per proglottis and bothridial loculi (11) than R. geminum, whereas R. shiplayi (41–44 testes, 20–23 loculi), R. rankini (50–55 testes, 23 loculi), and R. palombii (82–142 testes, 20–22 loculi) have more of each than R. geminum.

As stated above, Brooks (1977) described R. magniphallum in H. schmardae. Species of Rhinebothrium are thought to exhibit high degrees of specificity for their stingray hosts (e.g., Baer, 1948; Euzet, 1956; Campbell, 1970; Appy and Dailey, 1977). Thus, it was somewhat surprising for Brooks and Mayes (1980) to find R. magniphallum inhabiting Dasylipsis americana Hildebrand and Schroeder, Urotrygon venezuelae Schultz, and Urolophus jamaicensis (Cuvier). If it is the sister species of R. magniphallum, subsequent studies might show that R. geminum also exhibits reduced host specificity.

**DISCUSSION**

Jordan (1908) coined the term “geminate” species referring to pairs of sister species occurring on opposite sides of some form of geographic barrier; he used the Panama isthmus as a classical example. Jordan pointed out that these species pairs differed from one another to only a minor degree, suggesting
recent evolutionary divergence. More than half a century ago, Manter (1940) presented a list of putative geminate species pairs of digenetic trematodes inhabiting marine fishes living on each side of the isthmus. According to Lessios (1979), the completion of the Panamanian isthmus occurred between 3.5 to 5.7 million years ago and 2 million years ago, a relatively recent event. Many free-living taxa have been suggested as having geminate species representatives on each side of the isthmus (Voight [1988] for octopods, Lessios [1979] for sea urchins, Griffith [1987] for pinnotherid crabs of the genus Dissodactylus, and White [1986] for atherinid fishes).

Beebe and Tee-Van (1941) suggested that H. pacifica and H. schmardae are closely related on the basis of their general morphological similarity. Although overall similarity can be a misleading criterion for inferring sister group relationships, this hypothesis seems reasonable given that there are not other species of Himantura in the Caribbean Sea or the eastern Pacific. It is possible, therefore, that H. schmardae–H. pacifica, A. thorsoni–A. pacificus, and R. magniphallum–R. geminus are all geminate species pairs whose evolutionary origin resulted from the formation of the Panama isthmus barrier.

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LITERATURE CITED


