

2. Chen, J. R. P. and Ross, J. G., *Crop. Sci.*, 1963, 3, 355.
3. Franzke, C. J. and Sanders, M. E., *Bot. Gaz.*, 1964, 125, 170.
4. Driks, V. A., Ross, J. G. and Harpstead, D. D., *J. Hered.*, 1956, 47, 229.
5. Scott, K. G. and Patterson, F. L., *Crop. Sci.*, 1965, 5, 44.
6. Salanki, M. S. and Parameshwarappa, R., *Curr. Sci.*, 1968, 37, 356.
7. Joshi, Sheila and Raghuvanshi, S. S., *Flora*, 1966, 156, 291.
8. Raghuvanshi, S. S. and Singh, A. K., *Cytologia*, 1974, 39, 73.
9. Dwivedi, N. K., Sikdar, A. K., Dandin, S. B. and Sastry, C. R., *Curr. Sci.*, 1984, 53, 1036.

**NEW HOST RECORDS OF FISH LOUSE,
ERGASILUS MALNADENSIS
(COPEPODA : CYCLOPOIDA)**

T. VENKATESHAPPA, D. SEENAPPA* and
L. MANOHAR**

Karnataka State Department of Fisheries,
Shimoga 577 201; India.

* College of Agriculture, University of
Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad 580 005, India.

** Department of Zoology, Sir Thyagaraya College,
Madras 600 021, India.

AMONG the copepods of importance in fisheries, the fish louse, *Ergasilus* spp. are the predominant parasites of reservoir fishes. So far, six species of *Ergasilus* have been recorded on Indian freshwater fishes¹⁻⁵, of which, only *Ergasilus seshacharensis* was recorded on two hosts⁵, while the others were observed on only one host fish. Strong host specificity has been reported in *E. cerasteus*, *E. elongatus*, *E. felichthys*, *E. wareaglei* and *E. clupeidarum*⁶. But the host specificity of *Ergasilus* has been documented to be weak⁷. A new species of *E. malnadensis* was described from freshwater shark, *Wallago attu*⁸. Parasite incidence, intensity and level of infestation have also been reported⁹. The present communication deals with the new host records for this parasite.

Examination of monthly samples of fishes, collected from fish landing centres namely, Chinnakatte and Vanivalasapura of Vanivilasa Sagar reservoir and two major fish marketing centres at Hosadurga and Hiriyyur, revealed the infestation of predatory fishes viz. *Channa punctatus*, *C. striatus*, *Mastocembalus armatus*, *Mystus seenghala*, *Notopterus notopterus* and *Ompok bimaculatus* by *Ergasilus malnadensis*. The freshwater shark, *Wallago attu*

was also infested by the parasite and the intensity of infestation was severe when compared to that on the new fish hosts. This is the first record of *E. malnadensis* on these fishes. The site of infestation in all the species was gills except in *O. bimaculatus*. Based on the present host record, it may be opined that *E. malnadensis* is less host-specific. The weak host specificity may be due to the recent departure of ergasilids from the free-living habits as is evident from the absence of gross morphological modifications and their capacity to spend large part of life cycle in the free environment⁷. The low intensity of infestation of the parasite noticed on new host fishes indicates that these may not be the preferred hosts or the host-parasite relationship may be in the initial phase of establishment.

Further, it is interesting to note the infestation of *E. malnadensis* only on predatory fishes. Except for one report⁴, the fish louse was recorded only on predatory freshwater fishes in India. Though carps and plankton/herbivorous fishes contributed significantly to the fish catch of Vanivilasa Sagar reservoir, these were seldom noticed to be infested by *E. malnadensis* during the present study.

This paper forms part of the M. F. Sc. thesis submitted by the first author to the university of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore.

The authors thank Prof. H. P. C. Shetty, Director of Instruction, College of Fisheries, Mangalore for encouragement and facilities. The fellowship awarded to the first author by ICAR, New Delhi is gratefully acknowledged.

9 February 1987; Revised 11 September 1987

1. Southwell, T. and Prashad, B., *Rec. Indian Mus.*, 1918, 15, 352.
2. Sundara Raj, B., *Madras Fish Bull.*, 1923, 17, 45.
3. Pearse, A. S., *Rec. Indian Mus.*, 1932; 34, 289.
4. Karamchandani, S. J., *Rec. Indian Mus.*, 1952, 50, 287.
5. Sundara Bai, A., Ph.D. thesis, Bangalore University, Bangalore.
6. Johnson, S. K. and Rogers, W. A., *Agri. Exp. Stn. Auburn Univ., Bull.*, 1973, No. 445.
7. Kabata, Z., *Parasitic copepods of British fishes*, British Museum, Natural History, London, 1979, p. 486.
8. Venkateshappa, T., Seenappa, D. and Manohar, L., *Mysore J. Agric. Sci.*, 1987 (accepted).
9. Venkateshappa, T., Seenappa, D. and Manohar, L., *Mysore J. Agric. Sci.*, 1987, (accepted).