

Quill mites (Acari: Syringophilidae) from *Aegithalos caudatus* (Passeriformes: Aegithalidae)

MACIEJ SKORACKI¹ & GRZEGORZ HEBDA²

¹ Department of Animal Morphology, Adam Mickiewicz University, 28 Czerwca 1956/ 198, 61-485 Poznan, Poland; e-mail: skoracki@amu.edu.pl

² University of Opole, Department of Biosystematics, Laboratory of Vertebrate Zoology, Oleska 22, 45-052 Opole, Poland.

Abstract

Three species of syringophilid mites (Acari: Syringophilidae) were collected from quills of *Aegithalos caudatus* (Passeriformes: Aegithalidae) in Poland, *Picobia caudati* sp. n. from body feathers, *Dissonus scirpaceus* Skoracki, 1999 from rectrices, and *Syringophilopsis aegithali* Bochkov *et al.*, 2001 from secondaries.

Key words: Acari, quill mites, Syringophilidae, ectoparasites, *Aegithalos caudatus*

Introduction

The syringophilid mites are obligatory ectoparasites inhabiting quills of birds. At present, more than 120 named species of quill mites are known from birds belonging to 16 orders (Bochkov *et al.* 2004). Most of these mites are mono- or oligoxenous parasites associated with closely related host. They also show great adaptations to specific feather tracts (Kethley 1970) where individual bird specimen may have a mite species representing two-three different genera.

The present paper concerns the fauna of the syringophilid mites parasitizing *Aegithalos caudatus* (Passeriformes: Aegithalidae) in Poland: *Picobia caudati* sp. n., *Dissonus scirpaceus* Skoracki, 1999 and *Syringophilopsis aegithali* Bochkov *et al.*, 2001.

Material and methods

Flight feathers: secondaries, wing coverts, rectrices and body feathers were examined from 20 bird specimens of *Aegithalos caudatus*. The birds were trapped during the spring