

A new feather mite, *Aetacarus elanoides* sp. n. (Acari: Gabuciniidae), from the Swallow-tailed Kite *Elanoides forficatus* (Linnaeus) (Falconiformes: Accipitridae; Perninae).

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Abstract

We describe a new species of the feather mite genus *Aetacarus* Gaud & Atyeo, 1975 from the northern subspecies of the Swallow-tailed Kite, *Elanoides forficatus forficatus* (Linnaeus) (Falconiformes: Accipitridae) from the southeastern U.S.A. *Aetacarus elanoides* sp. n. differs from other described species in the genus by the following combination of features: male with terminal membranes as wide as or wider than base than long and seta *h1* slightly spatulate at tip; female with spatulate-mucronate seta *e2* and thick spine-like setae *h1*. This represents the first described feather mite from *E. forficatus*, and the first *Aetacarus* species described from a New World host.

Key words: Astigmata, Pterolichoidea, host-mite relationships, bird, raptor, North America

Introduction

Species of the feather mite genus *Aetacarus* Gaud & Atyeo, 1975 (Pterolichoidea: Gabuciniidae) inhabit flight feathers of avian hosts from the order Falconiformes (Gaud 1983; Philips 2000). Members of this genus can be distinguished from those of other gabuciniid genera by the following characters (Gaud & Atyeo 1996): presence of two setae *vi*, solenidion σ present on genu II, setae *si* and *se* similar in thickness (i.e., *si* not hairlike), anterior tarsi at least twice as long as palps, adanal discs in the male multipunctate, genital papillae in the female far anterior to setae *4a*, and setae *g* in the female closer to setae *3a* than *4a*.