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urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:D4F14965-D245-4A40-B8B8-A8FF2C795DC3

Mites of the genus *Passeroptes* Fain (Acariformes: Dermationidae) from passerines (Aves: Passeriformes) of North-Western Russia

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Abstract

Two new species of the genus *Passeroptes* Fain, 1964 are recorded from passerine birds (Passeriformes) of North-Western Russia: *Passeroptes hippolais* **sp. nov.** from *Hippolais icterina* (Vieillot) (Acrocephalidae) and *P. sylviae* **sp. nov.** from *Sylvia communis* (Latham) and *S. curruca* (Linnaeus) (Sylviidae). *Passeroptes gaudi* (Vassilev and Kolebinova, 1965) **comb. nov.** from *Sturnus vulgaris* (Linnaeus) (Sturnidae) is transferred from the genus *Rivoltasia* Canestrini, 1894; *Passeroptes sturninus* Arutunjan and Mironov, 1983 **syn. nov.** is synonymised with this species. The female of *Passeroptes gaudi* is redescribed. *Passeroptes dermicola* (Trouessart, 1886) is for the first time recorded from *Parus major* Linnaeus (Paridae).

Key words: Dermationidae, North West Russia, feather mites, Passeriformes, *Passeroptes*, systematics

Introduction

Mites of the family Dermationidae (Acariformes: Analgoidea) are permanent parasites living on the skin of birds (Dabert & Mironov 1999). To date this family includes about 50 species of 12 genera belonging to three subfamilies (Mironov *et al.* 2005; Bochkov & Mironov 2011). The subfamilies Apocnemidocoptinae and Otocoptoidinae include one species each, whereas all other dermationid species belong to the nominal subfamily. Almost exhaustive taxonomic revision of the subfamily Dermationinae was carried out by Fain (1965) and to date this monograph remains the only key book being suitable for the identification of these mites. A few dermationine species were described after this revision (Vassilev & Kolebinova 1965; Arutunjan & Mironov 1983; Fain & Bochkov 2003).

Two new and two previously described dermationine species were detected during our examination of passerine birds in the north-west part of Russia. All of them belong to the genus *Passeroptes* Fain 1964, which had included 22 species to date (Fain 1965; Arutunjan & Mironov 1983; Fain & Bochkov 2003).

In the present paper we describe these new species, create one new combination *Passeroptes gaudi* (Vassilev and Kolebinova, 1965) **comb. nov.** (transferred from *Revoltasia*) and synonymise *Passeroptes sturninus* Arutunjan and Mironov, 1983 **syn. nov.** with the former species. The female of *P. gaudi* was described insufficiently and we also redescribe it herein.

Material and methods

Birds examined in this study were captured at the bird-banding station “Fringilla” of the Biological Station Rybachy (Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg, Russia) - located near Rybachy village (55°09'15" N, 20°51'14" E), Curonian spit, Kaliningrad Province, Russia. Birds were captured for ringing, examined for the presence of mites and released back to the wild.