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**A NEW SPECIES OF *SURICATOECUS* (MALLOPHAGA:  
TRICHODECTIDAE) FROM THE WESTERN CUSIMANSE,  
*CROSSARCHUS OBSCURUS* (CARNIVORA: VIVERRIDAE)**

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ABSTRACT

The new species, *Suricatoecus occidentalis*, is described and illustrated from specimens taken off *Crossarchus obscurus* F. Cuvier (Carnivora: Viverridae) from the Ivory Coast and Nigeria. A key to the species in the *Suricatoecus helogale* group is provided.

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Werneck (1948) reviewed the 11 species of *Suricatoecus* Bedford and subsequently Emerson and Price (1967) described an additional species, *S. congoensis*. We have recently received a series of African *Suricatoecus* from the western cusimanse, *Crossarchus obscurus* F. Cuvier, that differs from these 12 known species, thereby representing a new species. It is our intent to describe and illustrate this new species here.

*Suricatoecus occidentalis* Emerson and Price, NEW SPECIES

TYPE-HOST: *Crossarchus obscurus* F. Cuvier.

DESCRIPTION: Male external morphology and chaetotaxy as shown in Fig. 1. Preantennal head margin triangular with small median indentation. Basal antennal segment enlarged. Head width 0.46 mm, length 0.38-0.40 mm. Abdominal segments II-VIII each with single median tergal plate, III-VII each with single median sternal plate; tergal plates with lateral margins elongated, tapered; tergal plate on II with heavier long seta at each corner. Genitalia symmetrical, parameres of equal length, and sac with numerous small serrations and 4 prominent large spines as shown in Fig. 4. Terminal abdominal segments elongated and sharply pointed as in Fig. 3. Total length, 1.41-1.50 mm.

Female external morphology and chaetotaxy as shown in Fig. 2. Preantennal head margin triangular with small median indentation. Head width 0.47-0.49 mm, length 0.38-0.41 mm. Antenna filiform. Abdominal segments II-VIII each with single median tergal plate, III-VI each with single median sternal plate. Lateral margins of abdominal tergal and sternal plates elongated, tapered. Posterior margin of vulva broadly rounded with median inverted V indentation as shown in Fig. 5. Gonopods without internal lobes. Total length, 1.34-1.43 mm.

TYPE-MATERIAL: Holotype ♂, allotype ♀, 5 paratypes collected off *Crossarchus obscurus* (LWR-1542), 24-VII-1969, Yabrasso, Ivory Coast, by L. W. Robbins; 2 paratypes collected off *C. obscurus* (HH-2108), 10-III-1965, Calabar, Eastern Region, Nigeria, by H. J. Herbert. The holotype and allotype will be deposited in the U. S. National Museum, with paratypes there and in other major collections.

*Suricatoecus occidentalis* belongs in the *helogale* species group, which includes the 4 species in which the gonopods of the ♀ have no internal lobes and the ♂ has a combination of sexually dimorphic antennae and elongated genitalic parameres.

Key to Species of the *Suricatoecus helogale* Group

- 1. Male ..... 2
- 1'. Female ..... 5
- 2(1). Posterior abdomen sharply attenuated (Fig. 3) ... *occidentalis* n. sp.
- 2'. Posterior abdomen bluntly rounded ..... 3
- 3(2'). No abdominal segments with more than 1 tergal plate .....  
..... *helogale* (Bedford, 1932)
- 3'. At least 1 abdominal segment with 2 tergal plates ..... 4
- 4(3'). Genitalic parameres symmetrical; medioanterior head margin with shallow indentation ..... *helogaloidis* Werneck, 1948
- 4'. Genitalic parameres asymmetrical; medioanterior head margin evenly rounded ..... *congoensis* Emerson and Price, 1967
- 5(1'). Vulval margin anterior to gonopods, evenly rounded, with median inverted V indentation (Fig. 5) ..... *occidentalis* n. sp.
- 5'. Vulval margin produced between gonopods, with fine irregular sharp projections and median inverted U indentation ..... 6
- 6(5'). Only abdominal segments VII-VIII each with tergal plate .....  
..... *helogaloidis* Werneck, 1948

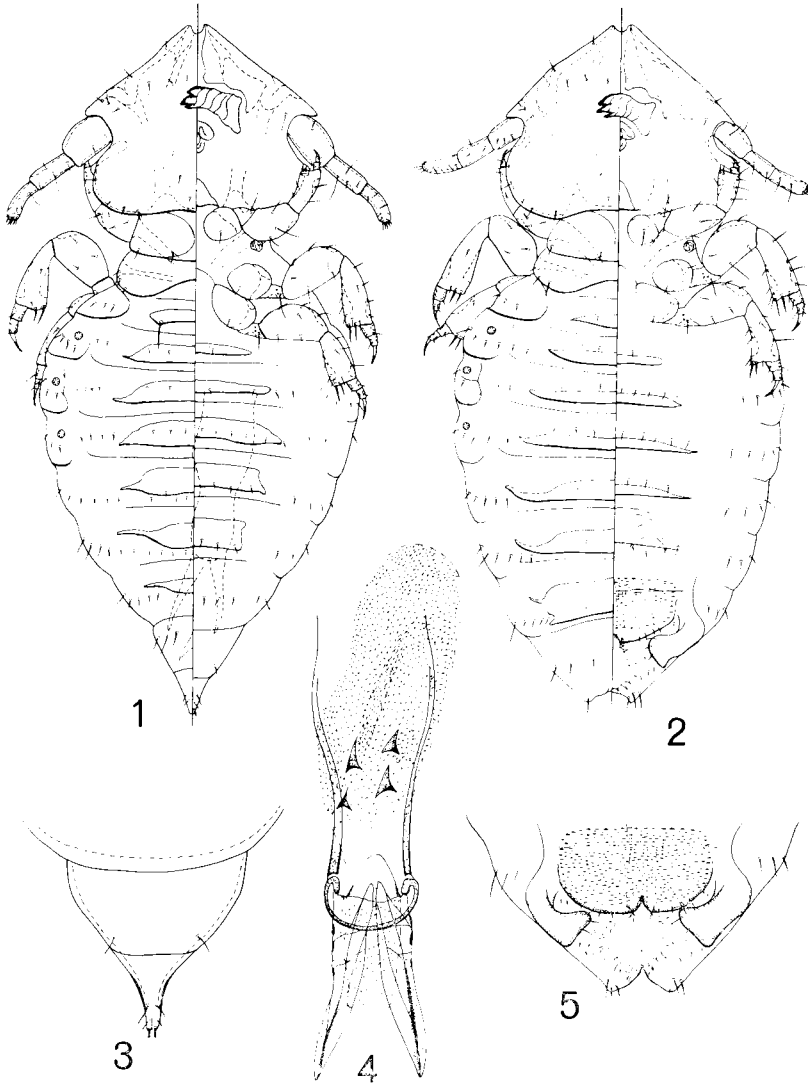


Fig. 1-5, *Suricatoecus occidentalis*, n. sp.: 1. Male; 2. Female; 3. Ventral terminalia of male; 4. Male genitalia; 5. Ventral terminalia of female.

- 6'. Abdominal segments II-VIII each with tergal plate ..... 7
- 7 (6'). Abdominal tergal plates relatively narrow and bluntly tapered; segments IV-VI without sternal plates ..... *helogale* (Bedford, 1932)
- 7'. Abdominal tergal plates wide, irregularly tapered; segments IV-VI each with sternal plate ..... *congoensis* Emerson and Price, 1967

Meester and Setzer (1971) stated that *Crossarchus obscurus* and *C. alexandri* Thomas and Wroughton, which is the type-host of *S. congoensis*,

may be conspecific. The species of Mallophaga on each of these hosts are quite different; our experience to date on host-parasite relationships causes us to conclude that the 2 hosts are not likely to be conspecific.

#### LITERATURE CITED

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