

RESEARCH NOTE

Synonymical notes to the *Menacanthus* species (Phthiraptera, Menoponidae) living on Passeriformes (Aves)

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Abstract. Two new synonyms of *Menacanthus eurysternus* have been suggested: *M. brelihi* described originally from *Panurus biarmicus* (L.) and *M. remizae* from *Remiz pendulinus pendulinus* (L.).

Key words: Phthiraptera, *Menacanthus*, new synonyms, Passeriformes

In a revision of the chewing lice of the genus *Menacanthus* Neumann, 1912 parasitising on the birds of the order Passeriformes (Price 1975, 1977) synonymised 36 species with *Menacanthus eurysternus* (Burmeister, 1838). Palma *et al.* (1998) added further 7 synonyms to this species. When studying the preserved parts of the chewing lice collection of Dr. F. Balát kept in the Moravian Museum in Brno I found two new synonyms of *M. eurysternus*.

Menacanthus eurysternus (Burmeister, 1838)

Menopon eurysternum Burmeister, 1838: 439

Menacanthus eurysternus s. l.; Price (1975: 617).

Type host: *Pica pica pica* (L., 1758).

Menacanthus brelihi Balát, 1981: 273 (new synonymy)

Type host: *Panurus biarmicus* (L., 1758).

Material examined ex *Panurus biarmicus*: holotype female, 15 June 1961, Velký Dvůr near Pohořelice, Moravia; paratypes 1 male, 1 female, 15 June 1961, Velký Dvůr near Pohořelice, 1 female, 17 September 1960, Neusiedl am See, Austria, 1 female, 18 June 1962, Nová Ves near Pohořelice, Moravia, coll. F. Balát.

This species was described by Balát (1981) on the basis of 3 males and 9 females. The description is rather general, includes one picture and a photograph of male and female and the data on body size of examined specimens, but description of chaetotaxy is incomplete. Although at the time when Balát described *M. brelihi* a redescription of *M. eurysternus* had been made by Price (1975), Balát considered only "absence of shorter strikingly thick spine-like setae" at the posterior margin of tergites to be sufficient for separating *M. brelihi* from *M. eurysternus*. A detailed examination of the Balát's material of chewing lice

showed, in contrast to the original description, that these setae are really present in the examined specimens and that they were overlooked erroneously. The examined slides are of a bad quality. This probably resulted in inaccurate measurements of the prothorax and metathorax width. Reexamination of the holotype and paratypes of *M. brelihi* has shown that all the main features are identical with *M. eurysternus*. On this basis I consider *M. brelihi* to be a junior synonym of *M. eurysternus*.

Menacanthus remizae Blagoveshtchensky, 1940: 34 (new synonymy)

Type host: *Remiza pendulina pendulina* = *Remiz pendulinus pendulinus* (L., 1758)

Material examined ex *Remiz pendulinus pendulinus*: 1 male, 18 September 1960, Neusiedl am See, Austria; 2 males, 2 females, 21 June 1981 and 4 males, 7 females, 26 July 1984, Velký Dvůr near Pohořelice, Moravia; 1 male, 1 August 1983, Gbelce, Slovakia, all coll. F. Balát; 1 female, 26 April 1994, Devínske Jazero; 1 male, 18 May 1994, Vysoká pri Morave and 2 females, 31 July 1994, Dolný Štál, all from Slovakia, coll. J. Krištofík.

Menacanthus remizae described by Blagoveshtchensky (1940) on the basis of 6 females was considered by Price (1977: 218) to be a nomen dubium. The original description was based on female, with incomplete chaetotaxy of the head (with the length of ventral spinous head processes of 0.08–0.10 mm), thorax and abdomen. In addition, the original description includes the picture of the female and ranges of length and width of head and whole body of all six females. All examined specimens from collections of Balát and the present author taken from the typical hosts were unambiguously identified with *M. eurysternus*. This proves that *M. remizae* is a junior synonym of *M. eurysternus*.

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