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A NEW RECORD OF THE QUILL-BORING HABIT IN MALLOPHAGA

BY H. E. PATERSON

Waterston (1922) summarised what was then known of quill-boring by Mallophaga, and recorded some details of the biology of *Actornithophilus patellatus* (Piager), 1890, from the Curlew (*Numenius arquata* L.).

Miss Theresa Clay of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) kindly identified a louse which I collected from inside drilled primary feathers of the Hamerkop (*Scopus umbretta* Gmel.), as *Colpocephalum scopinum* Mjöberg, 1910. The host had been collected at Potchefstroom, Western Transvaal on February 2nd, 1953. A second example of the host collected at Johannesburg on March 19th, 1954, was found to have one drilled primary feather.

It was noted that the apertures were drilled in the basal part of the rachis of the feathers. On gently warming the quill, the lice emerged from the holes and were easily captured. It is apparent that *C. scopinum* does not occur exclusively inside the quills of the feathers, but is frequently found on the vanes of the feathers, in fact the species had been collected from this site before the quill-boring habit was noticed.

This is apparently the first record of quill-boring by Mallophaga in the Ethiopian Region, and it is published in the hope that it will encourage collectors to look out for further examples of this interesting habit.

I wish to thank Miss Clay for the assistance she has given me.

REFERENCE

Waterston, J., 1922, Observations on the life-history of a Liotheid (Mallophaga) parasite of the Curlew (*Numenius arquata* Linn.), *Ent. mon. Mag.*, **58**:243-247.

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