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NEW RECORDS OF SUCKING LICE (INSECTA: PHTHIRAPTERA: ANOPLURA) ON RODENTS (MAMMALIA: RODENTIA: MURIDAE) FROM CHILE

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The rodent fauna of Chile includes 60 species in 31 genera, which represents more than half of the country's mammalian diversity. They are also over-represented in relation to the expected number according to the country and to the South America area (Contreras, 2000). Chilean rodents fall into two different lineages: the Caviomorpha (Guinea pigs and their allies) and the Myomorpha (rat and mouse) (Muñoz-Pedreros, 2000). The taxa Muridae Sigmodontinae with 31 native and one introduced taxa (the muskrat); the Muridae: Murinae comprising three introduced pest species (the Norwegian rat, the Black rat and the House mouse). The Sigmodontinae weighing less than 50 gr are omnivores or herbivores; the omnivore pest murids arrived with European settlers and now they are widespread (Redford and Eisenberg, 1992; Spotorno and Walker, 2000).

Phthiraptera are highly specialized ectoparasites living on birds and mammals. Studies of this group in Chile are fragmented and incomplete. With the aim of increasing our knowledge of the ectoparasite diversity living on wild rodents, we report the Phthiraptera collected on different species/specimens of Muridae (Mammalia: Rodentia)

held in the collection of the National Museum of Natural History of Santiago, Chile (MNHN).

The following louse-positive host species and their localities were identified: nine Norwegian rats (*Rattus norvegicus* [Berkkenhaut, 1769]) from Machali (34° 11' S 70° 39' W) and Talca (35° 25' S 71° 39' W); four Black rats (*Rattus rattus* [Linnaeus, 1758]) from Lago Peñuelas (33° 09' S 71° 32' W) to Talca; 10 Olivaceus mice (*Abrothrix olivaceus* Waterhouse, 1837) from "Lago Peñuelas" to Talca; three Andean mice (*Abrothrix andinus* [Philippi, 1868]) from "Termas del Flaco" (35° 57' S 70° 26' W) to Constitución (35° 20' S 71° 24' W); two Valdivian mole-mice (*Geoxus valdivianus* [Philippi, 1858]) from Quilán island, Chiloé (43° 25' S 74° 20' W) to El Toqui, Coyhaique (45° 10' S 72° 06' W); 24 Long-tailed rice rats (*Oligoryzomys longicaudatus* [Bennet 1833]) from La Serena (29° 54'S 71° 15'W) to Chile Chico (46° 33' S 71° 44' W); 11 Darwin's leaf-eared mice (*Phyllotis darwini* [Glanz 1977]) from San Felipe (32° 45' S 70° 43' W) to Constitución (35° 20' S 71° 24' W); four Andean leaf-eared mice (*Phyllotis xanthopygus vaccarum* [Waterhouse, 1837]) from "Termas del Flaco" to Talca.

Lice were collected by exhaustive combing of the host fur, and stored in alcohol 70%. They were subsequently slide-mounted using the Canada Balsam technique as described by Palma (1978).

Five species of lice were collected and identified from the eight examined species of rodents. Five specimens of *Hoplopleura pacifica* Ewing, 1924 were collected on *R. norvegicus*. This louse has been recorded in Argentina on *Rattus* sp. and *R. norvegicus* (Castro and Cicchino, 1998). The material reported here is the first record of *H. pacifica* from Chile.

Polyplax spinulosa (Burmeister, 1839) was found on *R. norvegicus* and *R. rattus*. This species was first recorded in Chile by Thompson (1940) on *R. rattus* in the Juan Fernández Island. This is the first record of *P. spinulosa* on *R. norvegicus* in Chile.

Ten specimens of *Hoplopleura andina* Castro, 1981 were taken from *A. olivaceus*, *A. andinus* and *G. valdivianus*. *H. andina* was originally recorded in Concepción, Chile, on *A. olivaceus*, as well as on *A. andinus* in Mendoza, Argentina, by Castro (1981). Besides, Castro (1982) recorded *H. andina* on *Abrothrix xanthorhinus* Waterhouse, 1837 in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, and Gómez (1998) recorded *H. andina* on *G. valdivianus* in Lonquimay, Chile. Recently, González-Acuña et al. (2003) reported this louse on *A. olivaceus* in Peñuelas, Chile. This is the first record of *H. andina* on *A. andinus* in Chile.

Specimens of *Hoplopleura travassosi* Werneck, 1932 were collected on *O. longicaudatus* from La Serena to Chile Chico. *H. travassosi* is a widespread species that parasitises several taxa of Muridae in Brasil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Venezuela (Durden and Musser, 1994; Castro and González, 1997; Castro and Cicchino, 1998). González-Acuña et al. (2003) recorded *H. travassosi* on *O. longicaudatus* in Talca and Coyhaique. The new locality records presented here extend the geographical distribution of *H. travassosi* north to La Serena (29° 54' S) and south to Chile Chico (46° 33' S).

Specimens of *Hoplopleura aitkeni* Johnson, 1972 were collected on *P. darwini* and *P. x. vaccarum* in several localities. *H. aitkeni* was originally described on *Akodon urichi* Allen and Chapman, 1897 in Bolivia and Venezuela. Castro (1985) found *H. aitkeni* on *A. budini* (Thomas, 1918) (=*A. caenosus*), *A. azarae* (Fischer, 1829), *A. molinæ* Contreras, 1698 and *Akodon nucus* Thomas, 1926 in Argentina. The two *Phyllotis* species reported here are all new host records for *H. aitkeni*, and this is also the first record of this louse from Chile.

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