A NEW SPECIES OF COSMOCERCA (NEMATODA: ASCARIDIDA: COSMOCERCIDAE) FROM GYMNOPHTHALMID LIZARDS OF WESTERN BRAZIL

UNA NUEVA ESPECIE DE COSMOCERCA (NEMATODA: ASCARIDIDA: COSMOCERCIDAE) DE SAURIOS GIMNOFTÁLMIDOS DEL OESTE DE BRASIL

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ABSTRACT

Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp., an intestinal parasite of the gymnophthalmid lizards Alopoglossus angulatus (Linnaeus, 1758) and Cercosaura eigenmanni (Griffin, 1917) from western Brazil is described and illustrated. Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. represents the 31st species assigned to the genus, and the 11th to be reported in the Neotropical region. Moreover, C. gymnophthalmicola n. sp. is the fourth species reported from lizard hosts, and is distinguished from other species of the genus Cosmocerca by possessing 6 pairs of plectanes and by a combination of spicule and gubernaculum length and by the absence of lateral alae in both sexes. The new species is more similar to C. banyulensis, C. chilensis, C. longicauda, C. parva and C. rara in having 6 pairs of plectanes, but differ from these species by larger spicules and absence of lateral alae in both sexes.

Keywords: Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. - Gymnophthalmidae - Neotropical - New species - Sauria - Squamata

RESUMEN

En este artículo se describe e ilustra a Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp., un parásito intestinal de los lagartos gimnoftálmidos Alopoglossus angulatus (Linnaeus, 1758) y Cercosaura eigenmanni (Griffin, 1917) del oeste de Brasil. Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. representa la 31ª especie asignada al género, y la 11ª en la región Neotropical. Por otra parte, C. gymnophthalmicola n. sp. es la cuarta especie que tiene hospederos lagartos, y se distingue de otras especies del género Cosmocerca por poseer 6 pares de plectanas y por una combinación de espiculas y gubernáculo y por la ausencia de alas laterales en ambos sexos. La nueva especie es más similar a C. banyulensis, C. chilensis, C. longicauda, C. parva y C. rara en tener 6 pares de plectanas, pero se diferencian de estas especies por espiculas más grandes y ausencia de ala lateral en ambos sexos.

Palabras clave: Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. - Gymnophthalmidae - Neotropical - Nueva especie - Sauria - Squamata
INTRODUCTION

The nematode genus *Cosmocerca* Diesing, 1861 is composed by 30 species (Bursey et al., 2015; Sou et al., 2018). They are distributed worldwide, and the Neotropical region harbors one third of the known species, mostly described from amphibian hosts (see Bursey et al., 2005; 2015).

To date, three species of *Cosmocerca* have been described from lizard hosts, with two being from gekkonids: *C. zugi* Bursey, Goldberg & Kraus, 2005 from *Cyrtodactylus louisiadensis* (De Vis, 1892) and *C. leytensis* Bursey, Goldberg, Siler & Brown, 2015 from *Cyrtodactylus gubaot* Welton, Siler, Linkem, Diesmos & Brown 2010 and *C. vr nivebradici* Bursey & Goldberg, 2004 from the gymnophthalmids *Cercosaura* (=*Prionodactylus* eigenmanni (Griffin, 1917)) and *C. oshaughnessyi* (Boulenger, 1885) (Bursey & Goldberg, 2004; Bursey et al., 2015). The last species was described from Ecuador and the Brazilian states of Rondonia, Acre and Amazonas (Bursey & Goldberg, 2004), neighbor states of Mato Grosso, where during parasitological surveys we found an undescribed species of *Cosmocerca* from gymnophthalmids, which is described herein.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Three adult specimens of *Alopoglossus angulatus* (Linnaeus, 1758) (mean snout vent length = 50.20 mm, standard deviation 7.72 mm) and nine adult specimens of *Cercosaura eigenmanni* (Griffin, 1917) (mean snout vent length = 34.86 mm, standard deviation 5.48 mm) were analyzed. All lizards were collected by hand, between May and October 2002, during a faunal rescue program at the site of construction of the reservoir of Guaporé hydroelectric power plant, Vale de São Domingos municipality, Mato Grosso State, Brazil. Helminths found in the small and large intestine of 5 lizards. Two adult females of *A. angulatus* had 1 and 4 nematodes each, and two adult males and one female of *C. eigenmanni* harbored three nematodes each. The nematodes were found in the small and large intestine of 2 from the 3 examined specimens of *A. angulatus*, a prevalence of 66.7%, and of 3 from the 9 examined specimens of *C. eigenmanni*, a prevalence of 33.3%. After careful examination and comparison with available descriptions of congeners, it became clear that nematodes found in *A. angulatus* and *C. eigenmanni* belong to a previously undescribed species of *Cosmocerca*.

RESULTS

Necropsy revealed 14 nematodes in the small and large intestine of 5 lizards. Two adult females of *A. angulatus* had 1 and 4 nematodes each, and two adult males and one female of *C. eigenmanni* harbored three nematodes each. The nematodes were found in the small and large intestine of 2 from the 3 examined specimens of *A. angulatus*, a prevalence of 66.7%, and of 3 from the 9 examined specimens of *C. eigenmanni*, a prevalence of 33.3%. After careful examination and comparison with available descriptions of congeners, it became clear that nematodes found in *A. angulatus* and *C. eigenmanni* belong to a previously undescribed species of *Cosmocerca*.
Cosmocerca gymnophthalmica n. sp.  
(Figs. 1A–D, 2)

Description: Small nematodes, with males smaller than females. Lateral alae absent in both male and females. Cuticle transversely striated. Mouth with three lips, with the dorsal lip bearing two large submedian papillae and the two ventrolateral lips with one submedian papillae and one amphid each. Esophagus starting with a short pharynx, elongated body, small isthmus and valved bulb. Excretory pore situated above the bulb in both male and females. Tapered conical tail in both sexes. Male with 2 large spicules, a relatively small gubernaculum and two rows of plectanes on ventral surface.

Male (Figs. 1B, D; 2) based on 1 adult specimen (Holotype, CHIOC 35867a): Length 2.2 mm; width at midbody 171.7. Esophagus 260.7 long: pharyngeal portion 34.8 long, corpus 225.9 long, bulb length 86.9; bulb width 95.8. Nerve ring 40.8; excretory pore 142.8 from anterior end. Tail 145.3 long, flexed ventrally. Spicules equal, heavily sclerotized at anterior portion, 266.1 long, width at distal portion 5.4. Gubernaculum V-shaped, 108.3 long, anterior portion heavily sclerotized with width 10.8. Posterior end with six pairs of preanal plectanes (Fig. 1D), with the last pair 52.8 from anal aperture. Six plectanes on each side, disposed parallel to long axis of body, consisting of complete rosettes of 15–16 punctuations and underlying supports (Fig. 2). One pair of rosette papillae closer...
to the first pair of plectanes and 7 pairs of simple papillae: One preanal pair closer to last pair of plectanes; one adanal pair in the anterior lip of anus; five postanal simple papillae, with 1 subdorsal pair and 4 ventral papillae (being two just before the tail filament and two in the middle of tail filament).

Female (Fig. 1A, C), based on 5 adult specimens CHIOC 35867b, CHIBB 3130: Length 3.7 ± 0.9 mm (3.1–4.9 mm); width at midbody 279 ± 120.6 (197–458). Esophagus 314 ± 75 (262.8–425.6) long; pharyngeal portion 58.3 ± 13.3 (47.6–77.6) long, corpus 313.9 ± 75.1 (262.8–425.6) long, bulb length 94.4 ± 11.1 (82.1–104.1); bulb width 107.7 ± 23.1 (93.6–142.1). Nerve ring 93.2 ± 29.8 (71.5–136.6) from anterior end. Excretory pore 231.8 ± 48.7 (171.6–279.3) from anterior end. Uteri prodelphic. Vulva 2.0 ± 0.4 mm (1.8–2.0) from anterior end. Eggs (N = 20) oval, thin-shelled with embryos, 57.8 ± 7.8 (42.9–68.0) long, 35.2 ± 3.9 (28.4–42.1) wide. Tail 243.6 ± 28.3 (231.7–267.6) long.

Figure 2. Plectanes ornamentation in *Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola* n. sp., ventral view.
A new species of Cosmocerca

**Taxonomic summary.** Type host: Alopoglossus angulatus (Northern teiid); Deposited in the Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso (UFMT 5730); Collection date 3 October 2002.

Additional host: Cercosaura eigenmanni (Eigenmann's Prionodactylus).

Type locality: Vale de São Domingos municipality, Mato Grosso state, Brazil, longitude 58º 58' W, latitude 15º 07' S.

Site of infection: Small and large intestine.

Voucher specimens: Instituto Oswaldo Cruz, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil; Holotype No. CHIOC 35867a, adult male; Allotype No. CHIOC 35867b, adult female; Coleção Helmintológica do Instituto de Biociências, Botucatu, SP, Brazil; Paratypes, 4 adult females, CHIBB 3130, 1 juvenile female, CHIBB 3136, 3 juvenile females, CHIBB 3138, 3 juvenile females, CHIBB 3128 and 2 juvenile females, CHIBB 3122.

Etymology: The new species is named in reference to infecting lizard members of the Gymnophthalmidae family.

**DISCUSSION**

From the other Cosmocerca species, the new species is promptly distinguished from 18 species, including six Australian and Oceanian species (C. archeyi, C. australis, C. limnodynastes, C. novaguineae, C. oroensis and C. zugi), one Nearctic (C. acanthurum), four Neotropical (C. cruzi, C. paraguayensis, C. podicipinus, and C. travassosi), two Paleartic (C. sardiniae and C. ornata), four Oriental (C. bengalensis, C. kalesari, C. leyensis and C. microhylae) and one Sino-Japanese species (C. japonica) by possessing 6 pairs of plectanes instead of 3–5 pairs of plectanes. Three species have number of plectanes higher than the new species, the Neotropical C. brasiliense (9 to 11 pairs; Travassos, 1931), the Oceanian C. tyleri (9 pairs) and the Oriental C. ishaqui (11 pairs) (Bursey et al., 2015; Sou et al., 2018).

Besides the number of plectanes (seven pairs), two Neotropical (C. uruguayensis, and C. vreibradici), one Panamanian (C. longispicula) and one Paleartic species (C. commutata) have the spicule size smaller than the new species species (155–180 μm) except C. longispicula (Bursey et al., 2015). Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. can also be distinguished from C. longispicula by both smaller size of spicules and gubernaculum (300 and 138 μm in C. longispicula; Moravec & Kaiser, 1994), absence of lateral alae (present in C. longispicula; Moravec & Kaiser, 1994) and also by lesser somatic papillae number (numerous in C. longispicula; Moravec & Kaiser, 1994) and size of eggs (72–81 μm long, 45–48 μm wide in C. longispicula; Moravec & Kaiser, 1994).

Finally, five species are known to possess 6 pairs of plectanes (Bursey et al., 2015): three from Neotropical region (C. chilensis, C. parva and C. rara) and two from the Paleartic (C. banyulensis and C. longicauda). Of these, C. parva, C. rara and C. banyulensis have variable number of plectanes (5–7 in C. parva, 6–7 in C. rara and 5–6 in C. banyulensis), but as we found only one male we do not know if there is variation in the number of plectanes in the new species; however, the new species can be differentiated from these species by the larger spicules (90–110 in C. parva, 200 in C. rara and 10 in C. banyulensis), absence of lateral alae (present in both C. parva, C. rara and C. banyulensis), and gubernaculum length (larger than C. parva with 95–108 and 80 in C. banyulensis and smaller than C. rara with 206; Mordeglia & Digiani, 1998; Bursey et al., 2005). Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. can be distinguished from C. chilensis by the larger spicule (80; Bursey et al., 2015) and by possessing 7 pairs of simple papillae, being one preanal, one adanal and five postanal (numerous preanal, two adanal and four postanal in C. chilensis, Lent & Freitas, 1948). From C. longicauda, the new species is distinguished by possessing larger spicule (92) and smaller gubernaculum (190) and also by absence of lateral alae (present; Bursey et al., 2015).

Cosmocerca gymnophthalmicola n. sp. is the 31st species assigned to the genus, and the 11th species recorded for the Neotropical region (Falcón-Ordaz et al., 2007; Bursey et al., 2015; Sou et al., 2018). Species of Cosmocerca are known to infect mainly frogs (over 88% of the species; see Bursey et al., 2005, 2013), and C. gymnophthalmicola n. sp. is the fourth species of the genus reported to have a reptilian definitive host. Species of Cosmocerca are monoxenous, with larvae actively infecting the hosts by penetration of integument (Anderson,
Bursey & Goldberg (2004) suggested that high prevalence of infection by Cosmocerca in gymnophthalmid lizards is due to time spent in wet leaf litter by these hosts. The recently discovery of many species of cosmocercids infecting gymnophthalmid lizards elsewhere in South America (e.g. Cosmocercoides sauria in Iphisa elegans – Ávila et al., 2010; Cosmocerca vrcibradici in Alopoglossus angulatus, and A. atriventris – Goldberg et al., 2007) may corroborate this prediction.

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