

Biodiversity of Platyhelminthes Parasites on Batoids (Elasmobranchii) Fishes from the Algerian Coasts: First Annotated Inventory

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Abstract : Parasites are recognized as an important component of biodiversity because of their crucial role in providing valuable information on host populations and in the functioning and balance of natural ecosystems. Although the knowledge about these pathogen organisms' diversity has increased these last years, many species still need to be identified and more investigations should be performed. Batoid fishes represent a significant biological resource, especially among populations of the Mediterranean basin. However, the data on their parasitic fauna, particularly in Algeria, remains unknown and still incomplete. Therefore, the aim of this study is to survey and provide data on the biodiversity of Platyhelminthes parasites of Elasmobranch fishes from Algerian coasts. 3217 specimens of Batoids belonging to 4 families, Topedinidae, Rajidae, Dasyatidae and Myliobatidae, caught in several sites on the Algerian coasts, were examined for their parasites. 47 taxa, including 7 new for science and belonging to 2 classes Monogenea and Cestoda, have been identified. Monogeneans presented the highest richness with 24 taxa and 5 new species for science: 4 Amphibdelloides species and one Calicotyle species. Cestodes are represented by 23 taxa and 3 new species: 2 Acanthobothrium and 1 species Echinobothrium. This study allowed us to establish for the first time in Algeria an inventory of Platyhelminthes parasites of this group of Chondrichthyes fish, as well as an invaluable contribution to the knowledge about the parasitic fauna of Algerian and Mediterranean Elasmobranch fishes.

Keywords : parasitic platyhelminthes, biodiversity, elasmobranchs, algerian coasts, inventory

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