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Ectoparasites Infestation of Free-Ranging Hedgehog (Etelerix Algirus) in North Western Libya

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Abstract : The aim of this study was to assess the prevalence of ectoparasites in hedgehogs (Etelerix algirus) in north western region of Libya. Seventy hedgehogs were sampled, and 39 (55.7%) were infested with external parasites. A total of 44 ticks, 491 fleas were collected from the infested hedgehogs and four species of ectoparasites were identified, one mite (Sarcoptes scabiei), one tick (Rhipicephalus appendiculatus) and two fleas (Xenopsylla cheopis and Ctenocephalides canis). For ectoparasites, 10/39 (25.6%) were infested by S. scabiei, 8/39 (20.5%) by Rh. appendiculatus and 11/39 (28.2%) by fleas. The prevalence of mixed infestation with S. scabiei and C. canis was 3(7.7%), Rh. appendiculatus and C. canis was 2 (5.1%) and infestation by two species of fleas was 5 (12.8%). The overall mixed infestation was 10 (25.6%). We concluded that the hedgehogs may play an important role in spreading external parasites and transmission of diseases from one region to another and from wildlife animals to domestic animals and human.

Keywords : ectoparasites, etelerix algirus, hedgehogs, Libya
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