
***Corallotaenia parva* (Cestoidea: Proteocephalidae) from the Black Bullhead, *Ameiurus melas* (Siluriformes: Ictaluridae) in Southeastern Oklahoma**

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Five of five (100%) Black Bullheads, *Ameiurus melas*, from a turbid pond in McCurtain County, Oklahoma, were found to be infected in their small intestine with the proteocephalid tapeworm, *Corallotaenia parva*. This is the second time *A. melas* has been reported as a host of *C. parva*, a previous record is from Colorado; however, this tapeworm is reported from Oklahoma for the first time.

INTRODUCTION

The Black Bullhead, *Ameiurus melas* (Rafinesque) has a native range over most of the central United States from southern Ontario, the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes south to northern Mexico and east of the Rockies except for the Atlantic Slope (Glodek 1980; Page and Burr 2011). In Oklahoma, *A. melas* is found statewide where it inhabits a variety of sites including quieter, soft-bottomed backwaters, oxbows, pools of smaller streams, and especially small turbid lakes and ponds (Miller and Robison 2004). This fish has been the subject of numerous parasitological surveys where it has been reported to be a host of several helminths (see Gibson 1996; Hoffman 1999; Mayberry et al. 2000). Herein we provide information on a cestode species from small sample of *A. melas* in southeastern Oklahoma.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

On 21 June 2011, five adult *A. melas* (mean \pm 1SD total length = 111.8 \pm 15.0, range 86–123 mm) were collected with baited hook and line from a small turbid pond just south of

Broken Bow in Lukfata off co. rd. E2075, McCurtain County, Oklahoma (34.007273°N, 94.765309°W). Fish were placed on ice and processed for intestinal parasites within 24 hr. They were killed by cervical dislocation and their entire digestive tract from their mouth to anus was removed, placed in Petri dishes containing 0.6% saline, and examined under a stereomicroscope. Tapeworms from the small intestine were fixed in hot 10% formalin, placed in individual vials containing 70% ethanol and shipped to coauthor C. R. B. Specimens were stained with acetocarmine, dehydrated through an ethanol series, cleared in xylene and mounted entire in Canada balsam. Voucher specimens of parasites were deposited in the United States National Parasite Collection (USNPC), Beltsville, Maryland as USNPC 104829. Host voucher specimens were deposited in the fish collection at Henderon State University (HSU), Arkadelphia, Arkansas as HSU 3390.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Five of five (100%) of the *A. melas* were found to be infected in their small intestine

with a proteocephalid tapeworm fitting the description of *Corallotaenia* (syn. *Corallobothrium parvum*) *parva* (Larsh 1941) Freze 1965 (Larsh 1941). No other helminths were found in the digestive tract. Intensity of infection was impossible to quantify as many specimens of *C. parva*, both adults and immatures too numerous to count, were found in the small intestine of *A. melas*.

This tapeworm was originally described as *Corallobothrium parvum* from Brown Bullheads, *Ameiurus nebulosus* (Lesueur) in Black Lake (Douglas Lake region), Michigan, and later in the same host in southern Illinois (Larsh 1941) (Fig. 1). It was subsequently transferred by Freze (1965) to the genus *Corallotaenia* (Freze 1965) Befus and Freeman 1973. A line drawing of the scolex of *C. parva* was provided by Rego (1995). Other hosts and localities of *C. parva* include *A. nebulosus* from Maine (Meyer 1958) and *A. melas* from Colorado (Siddiqi 1981) (Fig. 1). In addition, Hoffman (1999) reports *A. parva* in Channel Catfish, *Ictalurus punctatus* (Rafinesque) fry from fish farms. An experimental infection of *C. parva* plerocercoids was reported in a tropical aquarium fish, *Glavidichthys talcatus* (Larsh 1941). In the life cycle of *C. parva*, proceroids and plerocercoids are found in



Figure 1. Geographic distribution of *Corallotaenia parva*. Dots = previous records; star = new record.

copepods (*Cyclops*) and the second intermediate host may include small fishes (Larsh 1941). We document the second report of *C. parva* in *A. melas* and the first time the parasite has been reported from Oklahoma.

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