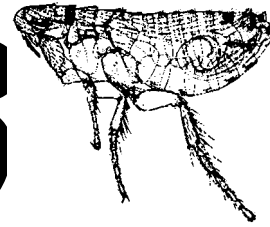


flea

NEWS

56



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FLEA NEWS is a biannual newsletter devoted to matters involving insects belonging to the order Siphonaptera (fleas) and related subjects. It is compiled and distributed free of charge by Robert E. Lewis <relewis@iastate.edu> in cooperation with the Department of Entomology at Iowa State University, Ames, IA, and a grant in aid from **Wellmark International**.

Flea News is mainly bibliographic in nature. Many of the sources are abstracting journals and title pages and not all citations have been checked for completeness or accuracy. Additional information will be provided upon written or e-mail request. Further, recipients are urged to contribute items of interest to the profession for inclusion herein.

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MISCELLANEA

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Dr. Glen Chilton of the Department of Biology, St. Mary's College, Calgary, Alberta, T2S 2N5, Canada, recently called my attention to the *Birds of North America* accounts published jointly by the American Ornithologists' Union and the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. To date 320 accounts have been published and the following titles include information on fleas:

7. Northern Mockingbird
11. Tree Swallow
12. House Sparrow
14. Violet-green Swallow
15. Blue Grouse
42. Northern Saw-whet Owl
48. European Starling
50. Cassin's Auklet
59. Glaucous-winged Gull
61. Burrowing Owl
64. Harris' Sparrow

- 114. Gyrfalcon
 - 124. Herring Gull
 - 137. Neotropical Cormorant
 - 142. Veery
 - 149. Cliff Swallow
 - 157. Crested Myna
 - 176. Bobolink
 - 182. Northern Waterthrush
 - 183. White-crowned Sparrow
 - 184. Red-winged Blackbird
 - 228. Florida Scrub-jay
 - 230. Le Conte's Thrasher
 - 257. Manx Shearwater
 - 268. Black Phoebe
 - 282. Pelagic Cormorant
 - 286. Sky Lark
 - 287. Purple Martin
 - 288. Chestnut-collared Longspur
 - 316. Northern Wheatear
- More information on this series is available from the Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1195

□□*□*

Those of you familiar with the literature on the Siphonaptera are likely aware of the only major treatment of the Siphonaptera of South America to be published in English. I am referring to "*A classification of the Siphonaptera of South America*" by **Dr. Phyllis Truth Johnson**, as Memoir Number 5 of the Entomological Society of Washington (1957). Dr. Johnson recently wrote that she has a number of copies of this monograph that she is willing to give to interested parties on a first come, first serve basis. She may be reached at 4721 East Harbor Drive, Friday Harbor, WA 98250

Shortly after sending out Flea News 55 last January I received a com-

munication from **Dr. Liu Jun**, No. 2 Shi Xi Road, Huhhot, 010031, China containing an English abstract of "*The Plague of Inner Mongolia*" by Liu Jiyou and other authors. The book contains sections dealing with The Epidemiology and Natural Foci of Plague; Bacteriology and Serology of Plague; Hosts and Vectors; and the History of and Future Prospects for Plague Control. This publication is available from Dr. Liu at the address given above. Its price, including postage, is \$50.00 American.

Also released in December of 1997 were volumes 11A, B and C (Insecta) of the series "*Microscopic Anatomy of Invertebrates*" edited by F.W. Harrison and published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. These volumes contain scattered references to fleas where appropriate, are sold only as a set, and cost \$675.00 American. Considering that the volumes are so current, consist of 1520 pages and cover almost every imaginable aspect of insect anatomy, the price may not be as outrageous as it first appears.

▲▲*▲*

While on the subject of publications, the 1997 winter issue of the *American Entomologist*, 43(4): 227-245, contains an interesting article entitled "*Historical Natural History: Insects and the Civil War*" by **Gary L. Miller**. It includes sections on Flies, 'Gallinippers' (mosquitoes), Lice, Bees and Wasps and Food-infesting insects, as well as fleas, and the following excerpts are reprinted from the flea section with permission from the Entomological Society of America.

"The fact that microbes caused more deaths than hostile fire is well known to the student of the American Civil War. However, much overlooked is the insect role in the transmission of disease-causing organisms. Maladies such as dysentery and malaria have an important or critical component and accounted for tremendous suffering during the war. Surrounded by insects such as flies, lice, and fleas, both Union and Confederate soldiers often found themselves battling more than each other. This account reveals the influence of insects on soldiering during the Civil War...

"Overcrowding and poor sanitation during the war provided excellent conditions for rodent populations and their fleas. In addition, camp mascots (e.g. dogs and cats) and humans could harbor their own infestations. Some soldiers were besieged by fleas. In 1862, a Mississippian returning from furlough complained of being preferred for flea attack. 'They have most Eate me up since I came Back her,' he related. 'I was fresh to them so they pitched in' (Wiley, 1994).

"The abundance of fleas in some camps resulted in some amazing stories, and one Confederate believed fleas could provide additional entertainment. 'I think there are 50 on my person at this time,' he wrote to his wife, 'but you know they never did trouble me.' He then added, 'May I have thought of you often while mashing fleas; if you were here you could have your own sport' (Wiley, 1994). Another Rebel said, 'they [fleas] collect in companies at knight fall for the purpos of carrying us off... though like the Yankees they are repulsed by desperate efforts & great patience' (Wiley, 1994).

"An even more imaginative comrade contended,

A great alarm was heard in the upper part of the regiment; hastening to the spot I enquired what was the matter. A man was asleep in his tent and a couple of fleas had taken holt on him and carried him half way to the river intending drownning [him] while asleep for he had sworn vengence against them (Wiley, 1994)...

"As with lice, fleas also became integrated into soldiering activities. The lowley flea even found its way into a stanza of A. Pender's *Goober Peas*:

I think my song has lasted almost long enough,

The subject's interesting, but the rhymes are mighty rough,

I wish this war was over, when free from rags and fleas,

We'd kiss our wives and sweethearts and gobble goober peas!"

▲▲*▲*

SIPHONAPTERA LITERATURE

Since the Traub Memorial issue of the Journal of Medical Entomology was due some time in July, I decided to wait with this issue until I could include the papers in it dealing with fleas. The issue is very well done and much credit goes to **Cluff Hopla** and **Lance Durden** who co-edited this number of the Journal.

Although it may not be obvious from the titles, citations included here pertain to fleas and the zoonoses associated with them. No particular effort has been made to search the medical and veterinary literature and the emphasis here is on the taxonomy, systematics and general biology of the order.

1994 (List 8)

Anonymous. B.E.N.H.S. Indoor Meeting - 11 January 1994. British Journal of Entomology and Natural History 7(3): 102-109. (*Orchopeas howardi* reported from S.E. London.)

1995 (List 6)

Suntsov, V.V., Ly Thi Vi Huong & N. I. Suntsova. The role of wild small animals in the plague foci of Vietnam. *Zoologicheskii Zhurnal* 74(9): 119-127.

1996 (List 5)

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FAN W.-m., WANG Y.-f. & QIAO J.-x. Catalogue of animals and fleas in Henan County, Huangnan Prefecture of Qinghai Province. *Endemic Diseases Bulletin* 11(3): 76-79.

Gómez, M.S., J. Blasco & J.C. Beaucournu. Occurrence of intergrades between *Odontopsyllus quirosi quirosi* and *Odontopsyllus quirosi episcopalis* (Insecta: Siphonaptera) in the north-east of Spain. *Parasite* 3: 81-84.

HU X.-l., HE J.-h. YANG Z.-m. et al. Observations on the specificity of blood feeding, life span and body weight of *Ctenophthalmus quadratus*. *Endemic Diseases Bulletin* 11(4): 21-22.

LIAN Y., HE J.-h. ZHAO W.-h. et al. A study on the vector efficacy of *Ctenophthalmus quadratus* in the transmission of plague. *Endemic Diseases Bulletin* 11(1): 20-23.

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WANG G.-l & CAI L.-y. Zoogeographical distribution of new species and subspecies of fleas in Qinghai Province. *Endemic Diseases Bulletin* 11(4): 44-45.

WANG L., JIN L.-x. & QI Z.-z. Checklist of arthropods naturally infected with *Yersinia pestis* in each natural focus of plague in China. *Endemic Diseases Bulletin* 11(1): 50-53.

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Wells, A. (Ed.) Zoological Catalogue of Australia. Vol. 28. Neuroptera, Strepsiptera, Mecoptera, Siphonaptera. CSIRO Publishing. Collingwood, Victoria, Australia. 230 pp. ISBN 0-643-05801-X

ZHANG H.-y., HE J.-h, ZHAO W.-h. et al. The vector efficiency of *Neopsylla specialis specialis* in transmitting plague. *Endemic Diseases Bulletin* 11(1): 24-26.

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