EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARASITOLOGY

October 10-14, 1994
İzmir-TURKEY

ABSTRACTS VOLUME - II

Editors in Chief : M. Ali Özcel
M. Ziya Alkan

Editorial board:

Nazmiye Altıntaş
Mucide Ak
Nilgün Daldal
Ahmet Üner
Yüksel Gürüz
Yusuf Özbel
Nevin Turgay
Metin Korkmaz
Metin Atambay
Seray Özensoy

1994
Turkish Society for Parasitology

Po4.09(720)

PARASITOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS ON INFESTATION BY OPHIONYSSUS NATRICIS (ACARI: MACRONYSSIDAE IN CAPTIVE SNAKES

* Principato M., ** Camerlengo L.
*Institute of Parasitology, Fac. of Veterinary Medicine, via S. Costanzo 4,06100 Perugia, Italy. ** Veterinary surgeon.

Ophionyssus natricis is a troublesome blood-sucking ectoparasite of reptiles. It is a gamasid mite that moves freely between animals and their environment and it is well adapted to live on a difficult host as the snake kept in captivity, whereas its presence is rare in the wild. In our survey the behaviour of this mite on Python and Natrix snakes was studied. Throughout the year two main peaks of infestation on snakes were observed: in spring and in summer. In those periods, mainly in the height and late in the summer, mites showed the most of their activity, located in a great number (even 280 mites/snake) under the ventral scales of the animal. This infestation was well visible also with the naked eye, in the shape of tiny black spots along the host's body. In order to eliminate this problem, the water of basins was frequently changed and each terrarium was cleaned and disinfested daily. Nevertheless, between August and September, numerous immature stages of O. natricis, but no eggs were observed either under the body scales, where mites located preferably. In late summer, occasionally, further to the death of one of the snakes, we found that the parasite's reproductive site was the internal periocular skin plicae and we could remove from that area 46 eggs of O. natricis. Such a reproductive behaviour implies, in our opinion, a particular parasite's capacity of adapting itself when external conditions make its survival rather difficult.