# A contribution to the ectoparasite fauna of bats (Mammalia: Chiroptera) in Mindoro Island, Philippines: I. Blood sucking Diptera (Nycteribiidae, Streblidae) and Siphonaptera (Ischnopsyllidae)

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Abstract. New data on bat ectoparasites from Mindoro Island, Philippines are reported. Eighty-three individuals of ectoparasitic insects representing seven species of Nycteribiidae and five species of Streblidae (both Diptera), and one species of Ischnopsyllidae (Siphonaptera) were recorded from 11 bat species captured in Naujan Lake National Park, Mindoro Oriental Province, Philippines. Raymondia pagodarum is a new record for the country. Eight species are also newly recorded for Mindoro Island, including Cyclopodia garrula, Leptocyclopodia ferrarii mabuhai, Megastrebla parvior, Brachytarsina amboinensis, B. werneri, R. pagodarum, R. pseudopagodarum and Thaumapsylla longiforceps. Five species are newly documented on various hosts: C. horsfieldi on Pteropus pumilus, M. parvior on Macroglossus minimus, B. amboinensis on Hipposideros diadema, B. werneri on Rhinolophus arcuatus and R. pagodarum on Hipposideros bicolor.

Key words: Bats, ectoparasites, Ischnopsyllidae, Nycteribiidae, Streblidae, Mindoro Island

## Introduction

Ectoparasites are externally borne organisms that are well-adapted as blood or lymph feeders (Patterson *et al.*, 1998; Patterson *et al.*, 2007). Early studies on bat ectoparasites in the Philippines were on various arthropod groups including bat flies (Ferris, 1924a,b, 1925a,b; Theodor 1955, 1963; Maa, 1962, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1975; Cuy, 1980a,b, 1981), fleas (Hopkins and Rothschild, 1956), chiggers (Womersley, 1957), ticks (Kohls, 1950), laelaptoids (Delfinado, 1960), spinturnicid mites (Delfinado and Baker, 1963; Baker and Delfinado, 1964; Prasad, 1970; Cuy, 1979) and sarcoptid mites (Klompen, 1992). The most recent literature on bat ectoparasites in

the Philippines include those by Zabat and Eduardo (2011) and Alvarez *et al.* (2015).

Although there is an immense diversity of ectoparasites associated with bats, they are often disregarded or neglected in the study of bat ecology (Messenger *et al.*, 2003). For instance, only a few studies have reported on the ectoparasites of bats in Mindoro. In his synopsis of Philippine bat flies, Cuy (1980a,b) reported only four species from Mindoro. In addition, Theodor (1963) described two new species (*Penicillidia oligacantha* and *P. acuminata*) which was erroneously reported by Ferris (1924b) as *Penicillidia jenynsii*. In 1981, Cuy also noted the presence of *Eucampsipoda philippinensis* in the island. Thus, only seven bat fly species are known in Mindoro.

These ectoparasites are of veterinary importance as potential vectors that enable pathogens and

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Bat species	Number inspected for ectoparasites	Number of infested individuals (%)
Fruit bats		
Cynopterus brachyotis	28	3 (10.71)
Eonycteris spelaea	2	2 (100)
Macroglossus minimus	30	1 (3.33)
Ptenochirus jagori	15	4 (26.67)
Pteropus pumilus	5	2 (40)
Rousettus amplexicaudatus	11	10 (90.91)
Insect bats		
Harpiocephalus harpia	1	0 (0)
Hipposideros bicolor	1	1 (100)
Hipposideros diadema	1	1 (100)
Myotis rufopictus	1	0 (0)
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2

**Table 1.** Species of bats inspected for ectoparasites at Naujan Lake National Park, Mindoro Island, Philippines in 2011

potentially pathogenic microorganisms to bypass barriers such as fur and skin (Messenger *et al.*, 2003; Dick and Patterson, 2006). In the Philippines, bats were recently shown to harbour parasitic protozoans (Murakoshi *et al.*, 2016) and viruses (Watanabe *et al.*, 2010; Taniguchi *et al.*, 2011; Tsuda *et al.*, 2012), although their zoonosis are still indefinite. Bat flies are also reported to harbour fungi belonging to Order Laloulbeniales (Blackwell, 1980; Marshall, 1982).

Rhinolophus arcuatus

In this paper, we provide an update on the bat fly and flea fauna present in Mindoro Island, particularly in the vicinities of Naujan Lake National Park.

### Materials and methods

Field sampling of bats and ectoparasites

Mist nets were used to capture bats. Upon removal from the nets, captured bats were placed separately in clean cloth bags for further identification and ectoparasite collection. We followed the treatment of Ingle and Heaney (1992) regarding bat nomenclature. Bats were identified to species level (Table 1). Voucher specimens were also collected for each species as stipulated in the Gratuitous Permit No. 2011-0002 issued by the Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and were deposited at the University of the Philippines Los Baños Museum of Natural History (UPLB MNH), Philippines. Bats that were not sacrificed and preserved as voucher specimens were released back to the wild. Prior to release, bats were fed with sugar-water solution for energy.

Bats that were sacrificed were euthanized with ethyl acetate. Afterwards, the surface of the bats was inspected closely with particular attention to body parts typically preferred by certain parasites, i.e. head, patagia and axilla. Ectoparasites were collected with a pair of forceps and placed in vials containing 70% ethanol.

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## Ectoparasite preparation and identification

Ectoparasites were identified using the identification key of Cuy (1980a,b) and Hopkins and Rothschild (1956). Streblidae, Ischnopsyllidae and representative individuals of Nycteribiidae were cleared in 10% potassium hydroxide (KOH) and mounted in modified Hoyer's medium. Unmounted specimens of nycteribiids were stored in 70% ethanol. Host and distribution records were based on available literature on ectoparasites of bats in the Philippines (Cuy, 1980a,b, 1981; Alvarez et al., 2015). Voucher specimens were deposited at the Entomological Collections, UPLB MNH.

#### Results

From the 11 species of bats that were collected, 83 individuals of ectoparasites, including seven species of nycteribiid flies, five species of streblid flies and one species of ischnopsyllid flea were documented (Table 2). This number includes five new host and eight new island records. *Raymondia pagodarum* (Diptera: Streblidae) is a new record to Mindoro and the Philippines. These species are given below.

*Ectoparasite accounts* 

Order Diptera
Family Nycteribiidae
Subfamily Cyclopodiinae
Genus Cyclopodia
Cyclopodia garrula Maa 1968

**Table 2.** Summary of bat ectoparasite species recorded in the Philippines and Mindoro Island, from previous studies and current study

All species recorded in Phillipines	Species recorded in Mindo	ro Island
	Previous studies	This study
Diptera: Streblidae		
Megastrebla parvior	_	+
Brachytarsina cucullata	_	_
Brachytarsina macrops	_	_
Brachytarsina hoogstraali	_	_
Brachytarsina amboinensis	_	+
Brachytarsina proxima	_	_
Brachytarsina werneri	_	+
Raymondia pagodarum*	_	+
Raymondia pseudopagodarum	_	+
Diptera: Nycteribiidae		
Leptocyclopodia pilosipectus	_	_
Leptocyclopodia simulans	+ (Cuy, 1980b, 1981)	+
Leptocyclopodia ferrarii mabuhai	_	+
Leptocyclopodia ferrarii palawanensis	_	_
Leptocyclopodia brevicula	_	_
Leptocyclopodia haplotes	_	_
Cyclopodia horsfieldi	+ (Cuy, 1980b, 1981)	+
Cyclopodia garrula	_	+
Eucampsipoda inermis	+ (Cuy, 1980b, 1981)	+
Eucampsipoda sundaica	+ (Cuy, 1980b, 1981)	+
Eucampsipoda philippinensis	+ (Cuy, 1980b, 1981)	+
Penicillidia dufourii tainani		_
Penicillidia oligacantha	+ (Theodor, 1963; Cuy, 1981)	_
Penicillidia acuminata	+ (Theodor, 1963; Cuy, 1981)	_
Basilia majuscula		_
Phthiridium brachyacantha	_	_
Phthiridium mindanaense	_	_
Nycteribia allotopa	_	_
Nycteribia allotopoides	_	_
Nycteribia parvula	_	_
Nycteribia parvuloides	_	_
Siphonaptera: Ischnopsyllidae	_	_
Thaumapsylla longiforceps	_	+
Thaumapsylla breviceps orientalis	_	_

<sup>+</sup>Species recorded in Mindoro.

This species was previously recorded on *Harpyionycteris whiteheadi* (Cuy, 1980b) and *Ptenochirus jagori* (Alvarez *et al.*, 2015; present study). It is endemic to the Philippines and previously recorded only from Mindanao (Maa, 1968) and Luzon (Alvarez *et al.*, 2015). The current collection represents a new distribution record for *C. garrula*.

Specimens examined: On *P. jagori*, one female (UPLBMNH DIP-1588).

Cyclopodia horsfieldi de Meijere 1899

Previously recorded from the pteropodids Pteropus vampyrus, P. hypomelanus, P. speciosus,

Acerodon jubatus and Rousettus amplexicaudatus (Cuy, 1980b, 1981), this bat fly species is newly recorded on *Pteropus pumilus*, a bat species endemic to the Philippines. *Cyclopodia horsfieldi* is widespread in Thailand, Cambodia and Indonesia. In the Philippines, it is recorded in Luzon, Mindoro, Palawan (Busuanga, Culion, Balabac), Leyte, Panay, Guimaras and Mindanao (Camiguin, Jolo) (Cuy, 1980b).

*Specimens examined:* On *P. pumilus,* four males and eight females (UPLBMNH DIP-1589 to 1600).

## Genus Eucampsipoda

Eucampsipoda inermis Theodor 1955

<sup>-</sup>Species not recorded in Mindoro.

<sup>\*</sup>New species record for the Phillipines.

Eucampsipoda inermis is a parasite of the pteropodids Rousettus amplexicudatus and Eonycteris spelaea. In the Philippines, it is distributed in Luzon, Catanduanes, Mindoro, Palawan (Busuanga, Balabac), Samar, Leyte, Cebu, Negros and Mindanao (Samal, Jolo). It is also widely distributed in Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia (Cuy, 1980b).

Specimens examined: On R. amplexicaudatus, 13 males and six females. (UPLBMNH DIP-1601 to 1613, 1615 to 1620); on E. spelaea, one male (UPLBMNH DIP-1614).

#### Eucampsipoda philippinensis Ferris 1924

This endemic species was previously recorded from Luzon, Leyte, Mindoro, Negros, Polillo and Marinduque. Host records include *Eonycteris robusta*, *Hipposideros diadema*, *R. amplexicaudatus*, *Miniopterus schreibersii* (Cuy, 1980b, 1981) and *P. jagori* (Alvarez *et al.*, 2015).

*Specimens examined:* On *R. amplexicaudatus*, one male, one female (UPLBMNH DIP-1633, 1634).

### Eucampsipoda sundaica Theodor 1955

Eucampsipoda sundaica is parasitic on R. amplexicaudatus and E. spelaea (Cuy, 1980b). This species is widely distributed in India, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines (Luzon, Mindoro, Palawan, Leyte, Negros and Mindanao) (Cuy, 1980b, 1981).

*Specimens examined:* On *E. spelaea*, two females (UPLBMNH DIP-1621, 1622).

## Genus Leptocyclopodia

Leptocyclopodia ferrarii mabuhai Maa 1975

This subspecies is recorded on the fruit bats *Cynopterus brachyotis, P. jagori, Haplonycteris fischeri, Macroglossus minimus, E. spelaea* and the insectivorous bat *H. diadema*. This endemic subspecies is distributed in Luzon, Leyte, Panay, Guimaras, Negros, Camiguin, Mindanao and recently reported for the first time in Mindoro.

Specimens examined: On C. brachyotis, one male, two females (UPLBMNH DIP-1623, 1624, 2431).

### Leptocyclopodia simulans Theodor 1959

This is another endemic species that is parasitic on the fruit bats *P. jagori, C. brachyotis, R. amplexicaudatus, E. robusta* and *M. minimus*. Cuy (1980b) noted that this species is distributed in Luzon, Mindoro, Leyte, Bohol, Cebu, Negros, Camiguin and Mindanao.

*Specimens examined:* On *P. jagori.* two males and one female (UPLBMNH DIP-1625, 1627, 1628); on *C. brachyotis*, one female (UPLBMNH DIP-1626).

# Family Streblidae Subfamily Nycteriboscinae Genus Megastrebla

Megastrebla parvior Maa 1962

In the synopsis of Cuy (1980a), Megastrebla parvior is parasitic on the vespertilionids Miniopterus australis and M. schreibersii, the hipposiderid H. diadema and the pteropodids R. amplexicaudatus, E. spelaea and E. robusta. In the current survey, it is newly recorded from the pteropodid M. minimus. This species is also newly reported in Mindoro, adding to its distribution in Luzon, Leyte, Negros, Cebu, Palawan, Balabac, Mindanao and Samal (Cuy, 1980a). It is also found in India, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia (Cuy, 1981).

Specimens examined: On M. minimus, one male (UPLBMNH DIP-1630); on R. amplexicaudatus, one male and two females (UPLBMNH DIP-1629, 1631, 1632).

#### Genus Brachytarsina

Brachytarsina amboinensis Rondani 1878

This species is common in the Oriental and Australian regions. In the Philippines, it is distributed in Luzon, Polillo, Tablas, Mindanao and in this study, it is recorded for the first time in Mindoro. In his account on the bat flies of the Philippines, Cuy (1980a) noted that *B. amboinensis* is parasitic on *M. australis*, *M. schreibersii*, *M. tristis*, *R. amplexicaudatus*, *E. spelaea*, *Rhinolophus* sp. and *Hipposideros coronatus*. This study reports its presence in *H. diadema*.

Specimens examined: On H. diadema, one female (UPLBMNH-DIP-1575); on Rhinolophus arcuatus, four females (UPLBMNH-DIP-1580, 1581, 2437, 2438).

# Brachytarsina werneri Jobling 1951

This is an endemic species previously recorded only from the hipposiderid *H. diadema* and the pteropodid *E. robusta*. This study reports its presence in *R. arcuatus*. In addition to its record in Luzon and Mindanao (Cuy, 1980a), its distribution extends to Mindoro.

Specimens examined: On R. arcuatus, one male and two females (UPLBMNH-DIP-2444 to 2446).

# Genus Raymondia

Raymondia pagodarum Speiser

The occurrence of this streblid bat fly in the Philippines is reported for the first time, extending its known geographical distribution. In the Oriental region, this species has overlapping distribution with *R. pseudopagodarum* but extends to tropical South Pacific islands such as the Solomon Islands, Papua (New Guinea) and New Britain (Maa, 1962). In this study, it was recorded only from *Hipposideros bicolor*.

*Specimens examined*: On *H. bicolor*, three females (UPLBMNH-DIP-2403 to 2405).

Raymondia pseudopagodarum Jobling 1951

This species is widely distributed in the Southeast Asia region, including Borneo, China, Malaya and the Philippines. In the country, it is recorded from Palawan, Negros, Mindanao, Luzon and currently in Mindoro (additional record). In the Philippines, it is known to parasitize *R. arcuatus*, *R. rufus*, *R. virgo*, *Hipposideros galeritus* (=H. diadema), Miniopterus schreibersii, M. australis, R. amplexicaudatus and E, spelaea (Cuy, 1980a).

*Specimens examined*: On *R. arcuatus*, one male, nine females (UPLBMNH-DIP-2432 to 2436, 2439 to 2443).

Order Siphonaptera
Family Ischnopsyllidae
Subfamily Thaumapsyllinae
Genus Thaumapsylla

Thaumapsylla longiforceps Traub 1951

This species is similar to T. breviceps but can be distinguished by the form of the clasper and crochet in males, and the large sinus and small number of bristles ( $\leq$ 6) on sternite VII in females. The two species also overlap in their host species.

Thaumapsylla longiforceps is distributed in the Oriental and Australian regions. In its Oriental range, it is reported from *Miniopterus tristis* (Philippines), *R. amplexicaudatus* (Java) and *C. brachyotis* (Borneo) (Hopkins and Rothschild, 1956). Its distribution extends to New Guinea where it is a parasite of *H. diadema* (Hopkins and Rothschild, 1956). This is the first record of this species in Mindoro. Previously, it was collected from Montalban, Rizal Province in Luzon Island (Hopkins and Rothschild, 1956).

*Specimens examined*: On *R. amplexicaudatus*, three males, one female (UPLBMNH-SIP-0001 to 0004).

#### Discussion

Prior to this survey, there were only seven species of ectoparasites recorded from bats in Mindoro. For the recent collection, we documented an additional seven species, including *R. pagodarum*, which is a

new record to Mindoro and the Philippines. Thus, 14 species of bat ectoparasites are currently known from the island. This also includes four species and one subspecies endemic to the Philippines. This number, however, is probably an underestimate and subsequent collections of other bat species will likely add to the ectoparasite fauna of Mindoro.

The pteropodid fauna of Mindoro island has amongst the most endemic species compared to any other island in the Philippines, with two endemic species, Desmalopex microleucopterus (Esselstyn et al., 2008) and Styloctenium mindorensis (Esselstyn, 2007). However, we were only able to capture four pteropodid species. Other pteropodids known from the island include A. jubatus, D. microleucopterus, E. robusta, H. fischeri, H. whiteheadi, P. vampyrus and S. mindorensis (Heaney et al., 2010). From these bat species that were not collected in the current study, it is possible to document at least 16 species of bat flies which are not previously reported on the island. Information on the ectoparasites of the recently described species of bats (i.e. D. microleucopterus and S. mindorensis) from Mindoro is non-existent.

During our survey, we were able to capture only five species of insectivorous bats. However, a further 21 species of bats have been recorded in Mindoro. These insect bats are usually cave dwelling and we failed to document any cave within the vicinities of Naujan Lake. More extensive collections are necessary to document more ectoparasite species that could be new host and locality records or new to science. Large samples are also necessary to determine and establish patterns of host–parasite relationships. During our sampling, we used the typical mist nets, which are less efficient in capturing echolocating bats that easily evade these nets. Thus, use of multiple methods to capture host bats is recommended for future studies.

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