A note on helminth parasites of common myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) in Namakkal, Tamil Nadu

G. Ponnudurai, T.J. Harikrishnan, A. Arulmozhi and N. Rani *

The mynas are commonly called as "Farmer's Friend" because they eat insects that destroy crop plants. They are susceptible to many diseases including helminthic infections. Of these, arthropod borne helminthic infections viz., cestodes and some nematodes are common because they eat insects which the helminth parasites use as their intermediate host. This paper describes an occurrence of tapeworm and nematode infection.

A myna was brought to the Avian Diagnostic Laboratory, Namakkal, for post mortem. On examination nematodes (5 numbers) and cestodes (6 numbers) were noted in the intestinal tract. The worms were collected in normal saline and brought to the Parasitology Laboratory for further confir-mation. The nematodes were cleared immediately and identified up to genus level as per (Sood, 2006). The tapeworms were flattened and stained with acetic alum carmine stain as per standard procedure. After clearing, the tapeworms were identified as per (Yamaguti, 1985).

The nematodes that were collected in this case were identified as *Diplotriaena* spp. The nematodes measured 80 – 85 mm x 0.55 – 0.68 mm, were milky white, the body was long and slender, mouth simple without lips. A pair of chitinous tridents (0.145 - 0.155 mm) were noted at the head end of the worm (Fig.1[w]). Eggs were oval, thick shelled, smooth measuring 52 - 65 x 39 – 52 µm and embryonated.

In India, several authors (Gupta and Johri, 1988 and Sathyanarayana and Tamilarasu, 1989) had earlier described different species, belonging to the genus *Diplotriaena,* from the body cavity of the myna. In the present case, the nematodes were recovered from the intestinal tract. The earlier workers had recorded different species viz., *D. mirzapurensis* (Soota and Chaturvedi, 1972), *D. nagpurensis* and *D. acridotherei* (Gupta and Johri, 1988) from the body of the myna and other wild birds. The nematodes encountered in this case might be a new species with new location which had so far not been recorded.

The tapeworms collected in this case measured 13 cm long. Each segment has a single set of repro-ductive organs. Ovary bilobed, median, genital pores open unilateral. In the gravid segments, the uterus is replaced with egg capsules. Each egg capsule contains a single egg (Fig.2[w]). Based on the characters observed, the tapeworms were identif-ied as *Railliettina* spp. (Yamaguti,1985). This collection confirmed the findings of Johri, (1934) who described *Railliettina penetrans* from Indian Myna.

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* **Department of Veterinary Parasitology, Veterinary College & Research Institute, Namakkal. Email: gponnu@rediffmail.com**

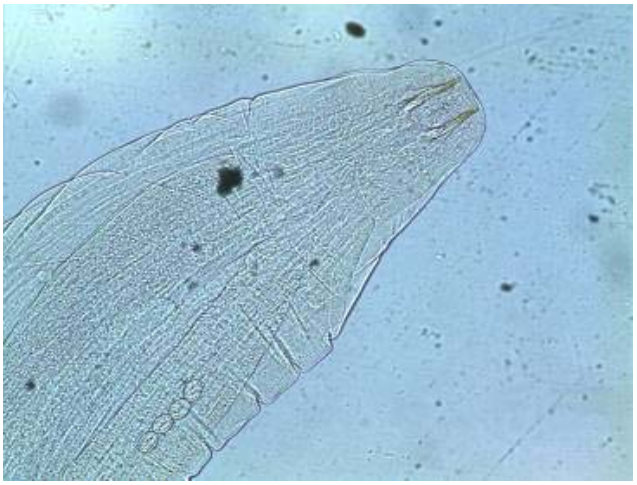

Fig.1 Anterior end of the nematode *Diplotriaena* spp. X 40

Fig.2 Egg of nematode *Diplotriaena* spp. X 100

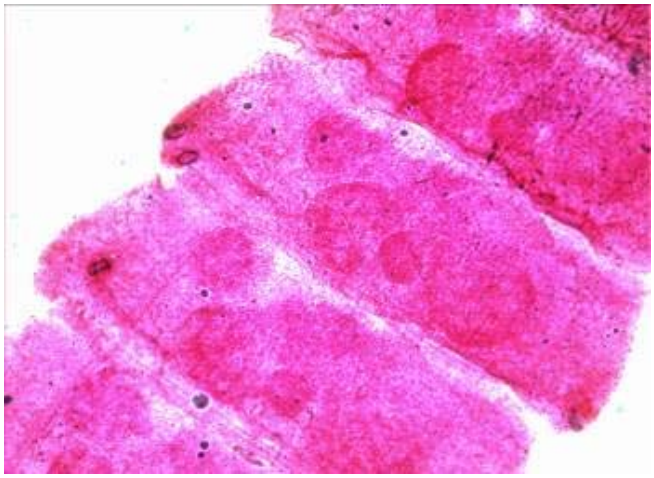

Fig.3 Mature segments of *Raillietina* spp.