

## Short Communication

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### A STOMACHICOLID METACERCARIA\*

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Since no metacercarial form of the subfamily stomachicolinae (Hemiuridae) has been described previously, it appears to be of interest to describe a stomachicolid metacercaria from the fish *Alectis indica* (Rupp), locally known as 'seem' or 'seeman', of Karachi coast.

In the course of study of marine fish trematodes of Karachi, a metacercaria was recovered from the intestine of a single fish, out of the 20 fishes examined. The trematode was studied alive, and then for detailed study it was mounted permanently. Body length 5.3 mm, width 1.36 mm, bluntly pointed posteriorly, anterior end broader, maximum width at the middle region of the body. Pre-oral lobe prominent, oral sucker subterminal  $0.37 \times 0.47$  mm. Pharynx strongly developed, elongated,  $0.27 \times 0.23$  mm, esophagus small  $0.05$  mm long. Ceca long forming distinct loops in the preacetabular region, passing down almost lateral to acetabulum, greatly convoluted in the postacetabular region and then run straight down terminating near the posterior extremity, filled with black material and therefore noticeable even with the naked eye (Fig. 1A). Posterolateral to oral sucker; one on each side, structures similar to nerve ganglia were present from which delicate nerves arise meeting anterior to oral sucker. Posterior to intestinal bifurcation rudimentary genital pore was obvious. Acetabulum  $0.6 \times 0.6$  mm. In the postacetabular region dark staining groups of cells representing the developing gonads were also present. Excretory vesicle tubular dilated anteriorly extending up to the last fold of ceca. Body was distinguishable into body proper and hind body by the presence of a cuticular fold in the postacetabular region. A closer examination revealed that the body was covered by a delicate transparent cuticle. Below this a thick muscular

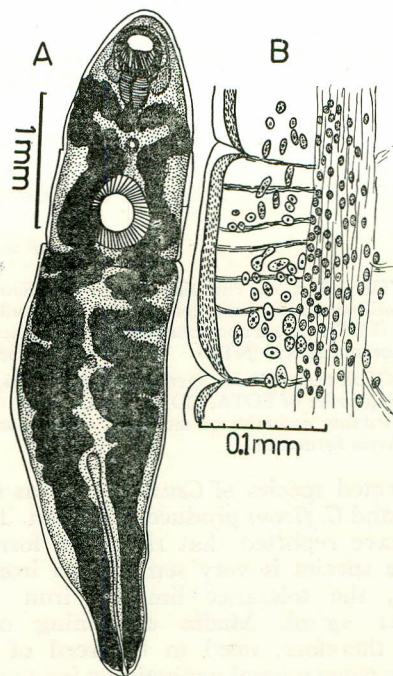


Fig. 1.—Stomachicolid metacercaria

layer and sparsely placed large cells interrupted sent. The inner region contained closely packed by muscle fibres were presmaller cells with many chromatin particles (Fig. 1B). The large cells towards the periphery represent subcuticular cells of mature form while the inner smaller cells presumably will differentiate into parenchyma and other structures.

The subterminal prominent oral sucker, strongly developed pharynx, short esophagus, distinctly black convoluted ceca, anteriorly situated acetabulum, distinguishable body proper and hind body and general body shape (Yamaguti<sup>1</sup> and author's own observations), serve to distinguish and identify the immature trematode as a stomachicolid metacercaria. As no reproductive structures were obvious except the primordial genital pore a generic diagnosis could not be made.

### References

1. S. Yamaguti, *Systema Helminthum, The Digenetic Trematodes of Vertebrates*. (Interscience, New York, 1958), Vol. 1, p. 310-312.

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