

RECORDS OF THE TICK *OTOBIUS MEGNINI* (DUGÈS) FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA (ACARINA: ARGASIDAE)

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Otobius megnini (Dugès) is a common parasite of cattle in the southern United States, where it is known as the spinose ear tick. Farther north, it is less plentiful and Cooley and Kohls (1944) list only nine instances of its presence in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. In these records its hosts were deer, mountain sheep, man, rabbit, cattle, and horses. This tick was first collected in Canada in 1941, when a nymph was taken from a cat at Ewings Landing on Okanagan Lake, British Columbia. This area lies below Terrace Mountain, upon which dwells a small band of mountain sheep. It is of interest that the late Allan Brooks, in a personal interview, spoke of having seen ticks in the ears of these animals about 50 years ago. Possibly these were of the above species.

In 1943, a number of the ticks were taken from a mountain goat at Bryant Creek, near Windermere, British Columbia, by Dr. Ian McTaggart Cowan

Two more collections were made by Dr. Cowan in 1950 from mountain sheep and a mule deer at Vaseaux Lake and Barriere. Because of the last record, attention was paid to deer brought out by hunters from the North Thompson Valley in the fall of 1951. Of the 28 deer examined, 15 had infested ears. The heaviest concentration was 172 ticks on one animal. The average infestation was approximately 30 ticks per infested animal. Domestic sheep graze in the same locality, but so far, no infestations have been found on them, although the ears of 350 were examined carefully. Why this tick restricts itself to feral hosts in its northern range is not yet known.

During the above survey 12 deer carcasses from the Okanagan Valley were examined and ticks were found on three of them; however, none were found on 41 carcasses from the Cariboo District (Clinton to Quesnel).

Reference

- Cooley, R. A., and G. M. Kohls. 1944. The Argasidae of North America, Central America, and Cuba. American Midland Nat. Monograph No. 1: 21-31.

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