KEPKATROMBICULA NOM. N., A NEW NAME FOR THE CHIGGER MITE GENUS EUTONELLA KUDRYASHOVA, 1988 (ACARI: TROMBICULIDAE), WITH NOTES ON ITS SYSTEMATICS

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ABSTRACT: A new substitute name, Kepkatrombicula nom. n., is proposed for the chigger mite genus Eutonella Kudryashova, 1988 (preoccupied by Müller, 1921 for caddis flies); list of included species is given. Validity of the genus and taxonomic status of a human-infesting chigger Trombicula desaleri Methlagl., 1928 are discussed.

KEY WORDS: chiggers, taxonomy, Eutonella, new name, Trombicula desaleri

The chigger mite genus Eutonella was established by Kudryashova (1988) for two new species and 11 species formerly included to the genus Neotrombicula Hirst, 1925 and Eltonella Audy, 1956 (Acari: Trombiculidae). The content of this work was included in the monograph of the same author (Kudryashova 1998). Later this genus was revised by Stekolnikov (2001) who considered 19 species including two newly described and four transferred from Neotrombicula. In this paper, the type species E. tadzikistanica (Kudryashova et Abou-Taka, 1987) was erroneously numbered among species transferred from Neotrombicula for the first time. Eutonella is a distinct genus characterized by stable complex of morphological traits (two genualae on leg I, double rows of dorsal idiosomal setae, and greatly convex rounded posterior margin of scutum). Moreover, presence of anterolateral shoulders of scutum in the majority of species and not rare occurrence of humeroven- tral idiosomal setae (in a quarter of species) are the characters of Eutonella, which were never observed in Neotrombicula. Therefore, we are not agreeing with the opinion of Fernandes and Kulkarni (2003) who considered Eutonella to be a synonym of Neotrombicula. Probably, this judgement was caused by a lack of understanding the original description of Eutonella in Russian, since the set of its characters cited by the authors (palpal tarsal setation 7BS, galeala N, and 2 genualae I) is incomplete.

Here we include Trombicula desaleri Methlagl., 1928 to this genus, on the base of its re-description made by Kepka (1964). Obviously, the author of the original description figured three genualae I in this species by mistake (Methlagl 1928). Moreover, we prepared and examined 30 specimens of this species collected on a chamois in Alps (Bruck am Ziller, Zillertal, Tyrol, Austria, 8.12.2009, ex Rupicapra r. rupicapra (L.), No. 83101, collector Steffen Rehbein) and deposited in the collection of Trombiculidae at the Zoological Institute RAS, St. Petersburg (Nos. 7936–7964). Basing on these data, we confirm presence of mastitibiala in T. desaleri (the seta on leg III, which is characteristic for the subgenera Digenualea Ver-cammen-Grandjean, 1960 and Polymasticula Ver-cammen-Grandjean et Kolebinova, 1985 in the genus Neotrombicula) and variability in its ciliation — mastitibiala can be nude or having few cilia (Kepka 1964). Since this species was originally recorded as an agent of trombidiosis in man, we can presume that other species of the genus under consideration can also be of a medical or veterinary importance.

The name Eutonella had been already used by Müller (1921) for a monotypic genus of caddis flies (Trichoptera). Therefore, we propose a new replacement name, Kepkatrombicula nom. n., for Eutonella Kudryashova, 1988. The new name is derived from the name of Prof. Otto Kepka (the University of Graz, Austria), who made a valuable contribution to the study of chigger mites in Europe.

Kepkatrombicula nom. n.


Type species. Neotrombicula tadzikistanica Kudryashova et Abou-Taka, 1987, by original designation.

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References


