

**On a new nematode, *Alibagascaris pseudosciaenae* gen.
et sp. nov. (Ascarididea: Heterochilidae) from marine
fishes of Alibag and Bombay***

S. D. KALYANKAR

Department of Zoology, Marathwada University, Aurangabad Maharashtra: India

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Ascarididea Yamaguti, 1961
Heterocoelidae Railliet and Henry, 1915
Filocapsulariinae Yamaguti, 1961
Alibagascaris gen. nov.
A. pseudosciaenae gen. et sp. nov.

On four occasions, two males and seven females of this worm were collected, while surveying the nematode fauna of marine fishes of India. The parasites were collected from the intestine of *Pseudosciaena diacanthus*, *Sciaena glaucus* and *Harpodon nehereus* from Bombay and Alibag. Many fishes examined during the period from October to December, harboured this parasite, but the parasite disappeared from March to May. In life, they are of brownish-yellow in colour.

These are thick worms with the sexes not much differing in size. The cuticle is thick with very minute striations. The body is almost of uniform diameter except at the extremities. The anterior end is rounded in both the sexes. The posterior end tapers immediately after the anal region, and ends in a small conical tip. The tip is covered all over with minute spines.

The mouth is triangular and surrounded by three lips, one dorsal and two subventral in position. There are three teeth, one on each lip. The lip folds are deep and head is distinct. The lips bear two papillae each. A pair of amphids is present. Dentigerous ridges are present on the lips, but interlabia

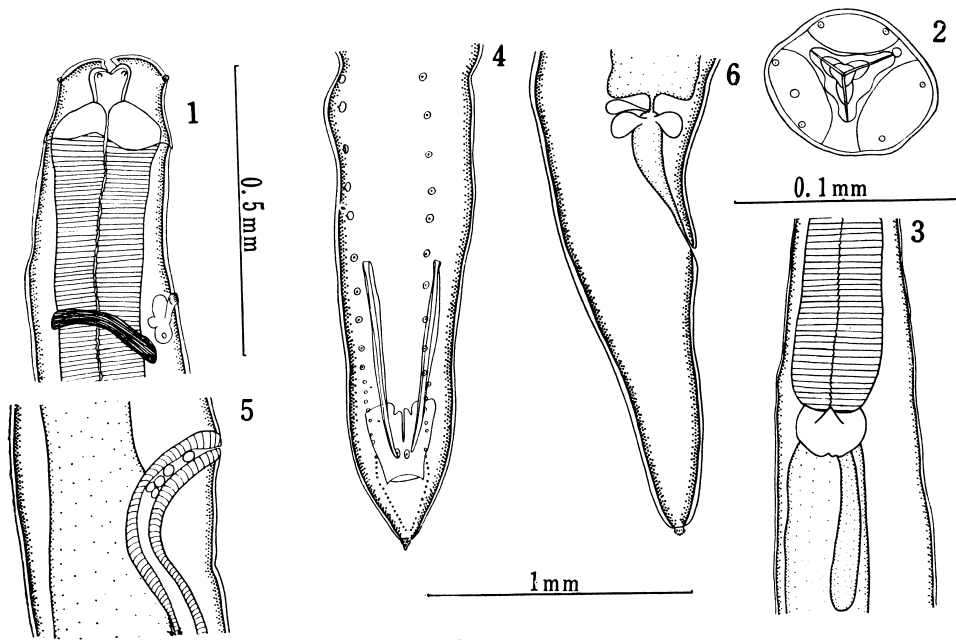
are lacking.

The mouth opens into the oesophagus. The oesophagus is muscular throughout, and ends in a small ventriculus, which is separated by a constriction from the rest of the oesophagus. The oesophagus enlarges gradually towards the posterior and measures 1.20-1.41 mm in length in the male and 1.68-1.80 mm in the female. The ventriculus is small measuring 0.09-0.10 mm in the male and 0.140-0.143 mm in the female. The length of the oesophageal appendix is 0.46-0.48 mm and 0.55-0.79 mm in the males and females respectively. The excretory pore opens at a distance of 0.36-0.37 mm from the head end in the male and 0.40-0.48 mm in the female. The nerve ring is situated at 0.34-0.37 mm and 0.41-0.43 mm from the anterior end in the respective sexes.

Male

The male measures 14.50-15.33 mm in length. The maximum body diameter is 0.48-0.50 mm. The caudal alae are absent. The spicules are similar and almost equal in length. They measure 0.29-0.33 mm in length. The gubernaculum is V-shaped, and measures 0.11 mm in length. In all 49 pairs of caudal papillae are counted, out of which 40 pairs are precloacal and 9 pairs are postcloacal. The size of the papillae decreases from anterior to posterior. The tail is conical and tip is covered all over with minute spines. It measures 0.10-0.11 mm in length.

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Alibagascaris pseudosciaenae gen. et sp. nov.

Fig. 1. Female, anterior end, lateral view. Fig. 2. End-on view, showing the teeth. Fig. 3. Female, showing ventriculus and oesophageal appendix. Fig. 4. Male, Posterior end, ventral view. Fig. 5. Female, lateral view, showing vulva. Fig. 6. Female, posterior end, lateral view.

Scale: 0.1 mm. applies to fig. 2.

0.5 mm. applies to figs. 1, 4 and 6.

1.0 mm. applies to figs. 3 and 5.

Female

The females are slightly larger than the males. They measure 16.36–18.59 mm in length. The maximum body diameters is 0.73–0.75 mm. The tail is short and measures 0.45–0.52 mm in length. It is conical and tip is covered all over with minute spines. The vulva is situated anterior to the middle of the body. It is flush with the ventral body surface and lies 3.72–3.74 mm from the head end. The eggs are thin shelled, not segmented and round in shape. The diameter of the egg is 0.034–0.035 mm.

Discussion

The present worm comes nearest to the members of the genera *Raphidascaris* Railliet et Henry, 1915, and *Raphidascaroides*

Yamaguti, 1941, but shows some important differences. In *Raphidascaris* the teeth and the gubernaculum are absent, while these structures are present in the worm under discussion. In *Raphidascaroides* as well as the present worm the dentigerous ridges on lips and spines on the tail are present. But interlabia are present in *Raphidascaroides* and absent in the present form.

Thus it cannot be accommodated in either genus. Hence, a new genus is proposed and is named as *Alibagascaris* gen. nov.

Generic Diagnosis

Lips with dentigerous ridges, each lip with a prominent tooth; interlabia absent. Oesophagus simple, ventriculus with a posterior appendix. Intestinal caecum absent. Male: Tail conical, with a tuft of spines; caudal papillae numerous; spicules equal and simi-

lar : gubernaculum present. Female : Vulva anterior to the middle of the body ; tail conical with spines at the tip. Parasites of marine fishes.

Type species : *Alibagascaris pseudosciaenae* gen. et sp. nov.

Host : *Pseudosciaena diacanthus*
Sciaena glaucus
Harpodon nehereus

Habitat : Intestine

Locality : Alibag & Bombay, Maharashtra, India.

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