

A Rare Cyclophyllidean Cestode Larva in *Channa punctatus* Bloch

During our studies on helminth parasites of fishes, we had encountered an air breathing fish *Channa punctatus* Bloch, infected with an encysted cestode larva. Out of nine piscine host examined from district Deoria (U.P.), two were found infected. Five and eight cysts, attached to gut wall of the host, were collected.

Cyst (Fig. 1) oval, thin walled, but not easily breakable, 0.810 mm × 0.710 mm. Usually, one cyst contains one protoscolex but two protoscolexes in one cyst were also

calcareous body has been observed in body of Protoscolexes, but a thick band of dark stained cells at hind end of body represent excretory bladder.

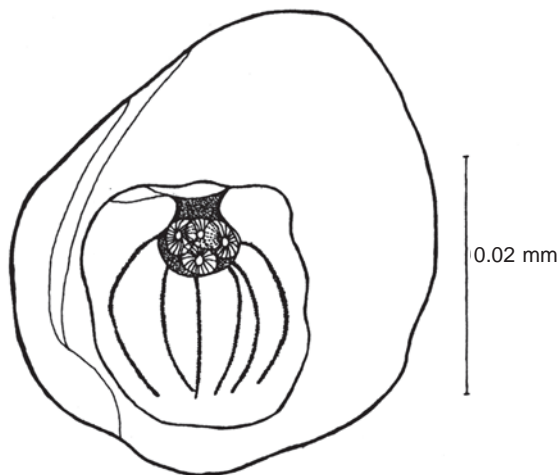


Fig. 1. Encysted larva

found (Fig. 2). Protoscolex not differentiated into strobilla, has two parts, an elongate-oval body and a triangular invaginated head. Six longitudinal canals, three on each side of body, of variable thickness, are observed, sometimes crossing to each other and extend upto head region. Protoscolex (Fig. 3) measures 1.150 mm × 0.695 mm. Invaginated head, having four suckers and a rudimentary rostellum measures 0.250 mm × 0.260 mm. A short neck is present. A gap is found in body of protoscolex for evagination of head. Suckers elongate, oval, muscular, well developed and measures 0.065–0.070 mm × 0.060–0.068 mm. Each one is besed with a band of muscle fibers. Rostellum is thick and beset with numerous hooks. No

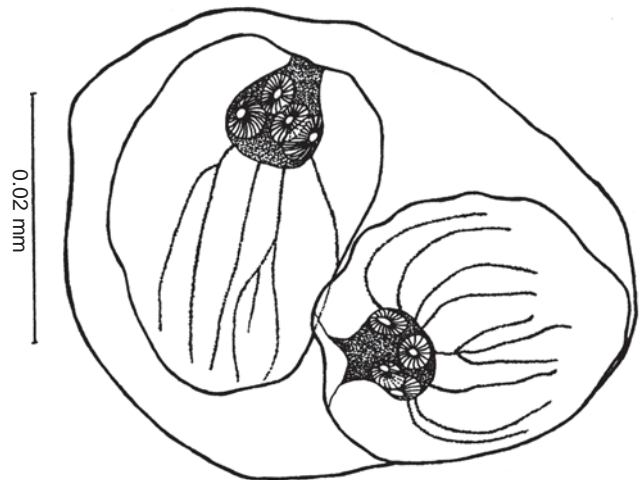


Fig. 2. Two larva in one cyst.

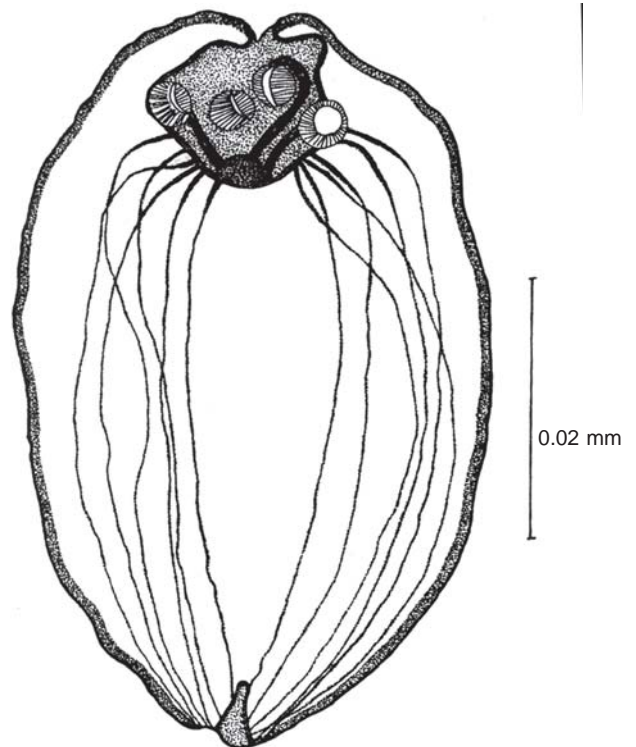


Fig. 3. Protoscolex

Record of cestode larvae from freshwater fishes are not many (Chauhan and Ramkrishna¹, Ramadevi and Hanumantha Rao², Saxena³ and Gairola and Malhotra⁴). Due to presence of four suckers and a rostellum with hooks, the present larva simulates with a Cyclophyllidean adult cestode. A variety of larval forms viz., *Cystocercus*, *Cysticeroid*, or *Pleuroceroid* are known in Cyclophyllidean cestodes (Yamaguti⁵). Earlier, Saxena³ reported a Cyclophyllidean larva found encysted in body muscles of *Heteropneustes fossilis* (Bloch) at Lucknow which simulates the present larva in general topography of organ. Ours is another records, but from different host i.e. *Channa punctatus* (Bloch) and locality. This fish is reported, for the first time, serving as an intermediate host in life cycles of a Cyclophyllidean cestode which possibly has some Ichthyophagous birds or mammals as its definite host.

Financial assistance received from the authorities of DST (San. no. SR/SO/AS-44/2005) is gratefully acknowledged. □

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Received : 23 July, 2009

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