

# 5<sup>th</sup> Animal Health and Veterinary Medicine Congress

September 26-27, 2016 Valencia, Spain

## Effect of locality and host sex on the metazoan parasitic infestation of *Scarus* fish from the Red Sea coast at Jeddah and Rabigh in Saudi Arabia

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The present study was carried out on a total number of 60 specimens of *Scarus* fish caught from the Red Sea coast of Jeddah and Rabigh cities in Saudi Arabia. 30 fish from each locality were carefully examined for the determination of their metazoan parasitic fauna. Collected parasites were identified as Monogenea (*Diplectanum* spp.), Isopoda (praniza larva), Copepoda (*Hatshakia* spp.) and Digenea (*Bucephalus* and *Lecithoclaster* spp.). Out of 30 specimens of fish caught from the coast of Jeddah, 13 (43.4%) were infested by 90 parasites which comprise of two parasite species, *Diplectanum* spp. and praniza Larva with prevalence of infestation 40% and 3.33% respectively. Mean intensity of the previous infestations varied from 6-7 parasites per fish. Digenean parasites were not detected in *Scarus* fish of Jeddah. Concerning *Scarus* fish of Rabigh, a total number of infested fish was 19 (63.33%) with a number of 205 parasites representing 4 parasite species. Single and multiple infestations were recorded. Monogenea (*Diplectanum* spp.) represents the most commonly encountered ectoparasite with prevalence of 53.3% and mean intensity of 10.9 followed by Digenea (20%) and mean intensity of 3.8 then Isopoda (13.3%) and mean intensity of 1.75. No parasitic infestation was observed in *Scarus* female fish (no. 10) of Jeddah (0.0%). Out of 20 male fish 13 (65%) were infested with 90 parasites with mean intensity 6.9, comprising two parasite species, Isopoda with prevalence of 55.5 and mean intensity of 7 and Copepoda in only one fish (5.0%) and intensity of 6. Female fish from Rabigh (no. 19) had higher prevalence (84.2%) than male (no. 11) which showed prevalence of 27.3% with Isopoda only. Four parasite species were recovered from female fish of Rabigh. Monogenea showed the highest prevalence (68.7) and mean intensity (9.7) followed by Digenea, prevalence (31.56%) and mean intensity (3.8) then Isopoda showed the lowest prevalence (21.05%) and mean intensity (1.75). Statistical analysis was used to compare the obtained data and factors that may determine the relationship between parasitic prevalence and intensity and fish sex were discussed.

### Biography

Areej O Bakhraibah is currently working as an Assistant Professor of Zoology Department and Supervisor of Zoology Section at King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia.

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