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A new bat-flea from Nigeria (Siphonaptera: Ischnopsyllidae)

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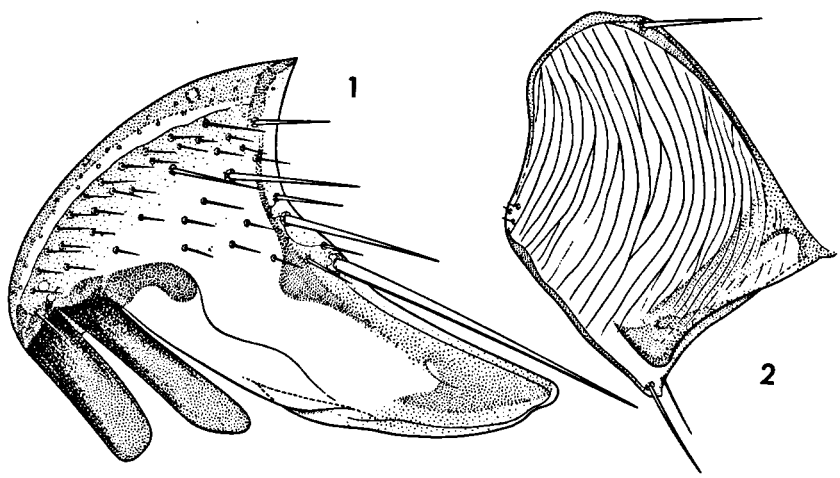
ABSTRACT

Lagaropsylla alloides, a new species of flea, is described on the basis of a male specimen collected from the bat *Tadarida congica* in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Among the bat-parasites collected incidentally by Drs. W. Bergmans during a collecting trip in Nigeria, in the summer of 1976, there are two fleas. One is a female specimen of *Thaumapsylla breviceps* Rothschild, 1907, collected at Jos, 09°55'N 08°54'E, central Nigeria, from the Megachiropteran *Rousettus aegyptiacus* (Geoffroy), on June 29, 1976. This flea is a specific parasite of



Figs. 1-2. *Lagaropsylla alloides* sp.n. (holotype). 1. Preantennal part of head, 2. metasternum.

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fruit-bats belonging to the genera *Rousettus* and *Eidolon* and is widely distributed in the Ethiopian and Oriental Regions. The other flea, collected a short distance to the north of Lagos from the Microchiropteran bat *Tadarida congica* (Allen), is a male specimen of a very distinct and hitherto undescribed species of *Lagaropsylla,* a genus of bat-fleas with 17 species nearly all of which are associated with bats of the genus *Tadarida.* No fleas had yet been collected from the little-known bat *Tadarida congica* which is found in jungle and savannah regions of north-eastern Zaïre and adjoining Uganda, and now also known from Ghana and Nigeria (Bergmans, in press).

I am much obliged to Drs. Bergmans for extending our knowledge of the African flea-fauna.

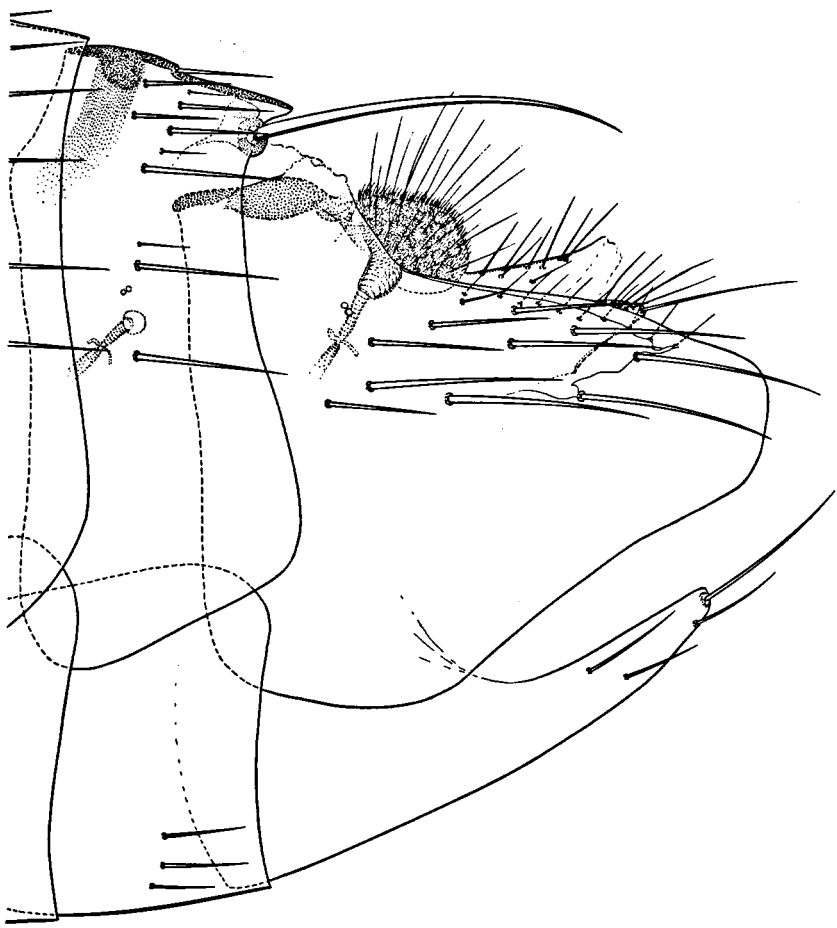


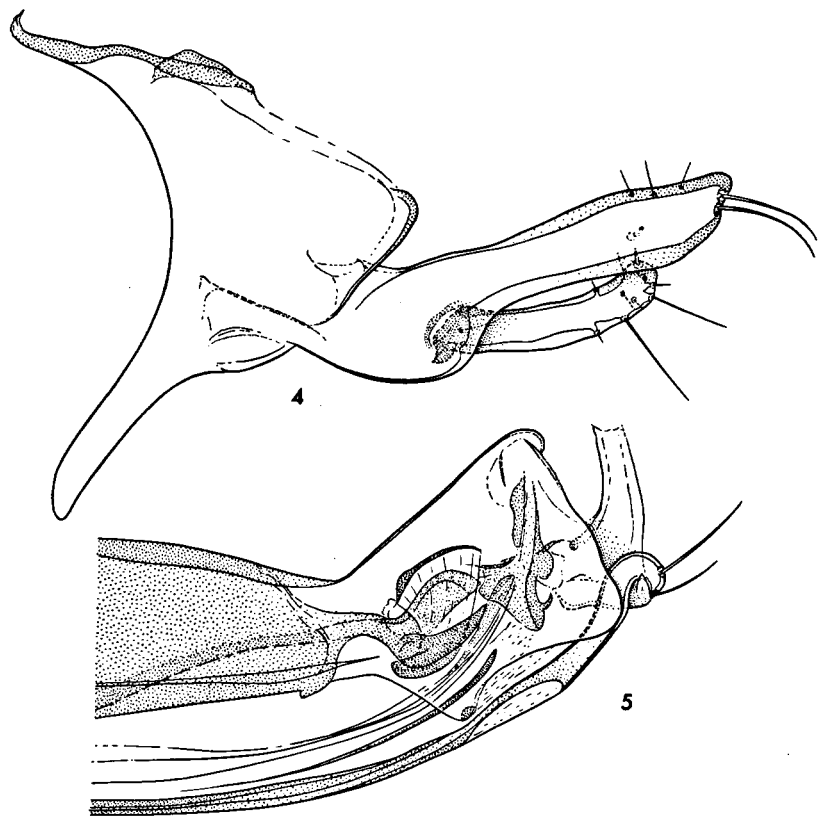
Fig. 3. *Lagaropsylla alloides* sp.n. (holotype). Segments VII, VIII and anal segment.

Lagaropsylla alloides sp.n. (Figs. 1-5)

Type material: Male holotype, Agege, 06°38'N 03°19'E, Nigeria, from *Tadarida (Mops) congica* (Allen), 28.VIII.1976, *leg.* W. Bergmans. Holotype in the Zoölogisch Museum Amsterdam.

Diagnosis: The male of this new species differs markedly from that of the eleven other African representatives of the genus in the structure of the genitalia and by the presence of a few setae at the ventro-posterior angle of the metasternum.

Description: Head (Fig. 1) with a fairly stout and gently downwards curved preoral tuber. Pronotal ctenidium consisting of 20 straight and sharply pointed spines. Two setae along the ventral margin of the mesosternum while on the metasternum (Fig. 2) similar setae are placed at the ventro-posterior angle. In other respects the head, thorax, legs and pregenital abdominal segments are as usual for the genus.



Figs. 4-5. *Lagaropsylla alloides* sp.n. (holotype), 4. Paramere, 5. aedeagus and sternum IX.

Male (Figs. 3-5): Tergum VIII (Fig. 3) triangular, with a dorsal dark sclerotization, its field of setae restricted to the upper half. Apical half of sternum VIII (Fig. 3) very narrow, with one apical and a few preapical setae. Paramere (Fig. 4) very distinctive: the dorsal margin of the apodeme of tergum IX is darkly sclerotized; the manubrium is of medium length; the basimere is considerably narrowed beyond the acetabulum; the two acetabular setae are situated at the apex of the basimere; the telomere is long and narrow throughout, slightly curved upwards and with a simple chaetotaxy. Sternum IX (Fig. 5) greatly reduced to form a slender tenterhook, its apical part, bearing only two setae, semicircular and grasping the aedeagal pollex hamuli; proximal arm of sternum IX absent. The aedeagus is structured as shown in Fig. 5; because of its position between the parameres not every detail is clearly discernible in the preparation and especially the tubus interior and the hamulus may have to be redrawn in due time when, hopefully, additional material becomes available.

Female: as yet unknown.

Length: ♂ 1.5 mm.

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