

Hoffman, G. L. (1999): **Parasites of North American freshwater fishes**. 2nd Edition. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 539 pages, numerous line drawings and photographs (33 in colour), cloth, 90 US\$. ISBN 0-8014-3409-2.

There are many books on fish parasites because these organisms are economically important. Hoffman's treatise, now in the second, thoroughly revised and updated edition, contains a lifetime experience, and this makes it unique both in quality and comprehensiveness.

The book contains several main sections: an introduction focusing on public health aspects and key literature on fish parasites; a methodological section, which is too limited in my opinion; a detailed description, including keys to families and genera of the parasites, ranging from algae and fungi to copepods and isopods; a very detailed (62 pages) fish and parasite checklist the compilation of which must have been an immense amount of work; a small section on chemotherapy and prophylaxis; an extremely useful collection of almost 4000 references focusing on North American literature; a glossary of fish parasitology terms; and a carefully prepared index with about 3500 entries.

As an example and because this reviewer is a protozoologist, the protists will be reviewed in some detail. The chapter has 71 pages and commences with brief characterisations of

the major groups, ranging from Rhizopoda to Sporozoa. Parasitologists will highly appreciate the detailed treatment of the Myxozoa. Keys to families and genera are provided, which, in case of the ciliates, are probably difficult to follow. Certainly, Hoffman's text cannot replace the detailed treatment of protozoan fish parasites by Lom and Dyková (1992), but it is a well-done chapter in the context of the whole book and practitioners will like it for its simplicity and conciseness.

Although the book concentrates on parasites of North American fishes, it can be warmly recommended to the global audience because many hosts and their parasites are cultivated worldwide and because of the unique literature compilation. Furthermore, often data from outside of North America were included. There is only one major drawback: I miss some sort of key guiding from the symptoms to the parasites.

Finally, some words should be said about the technical quality of the book. It is hard bound with a nice cover showing photographs of a fish, a fungal parasite, and of four protozoan parasites. The text is well edited and I appreciate the sufficient space between text and spine. Text and line drawings are well reproduced and arranged. Printing quality of the halftones is sufficient; they should have been more nicely arranged in some cases. The price is very reasonable considering page number, photographs, and the format (28 × 21.5 cm).

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