*Bull. Iraq nat. Hist. Mus.* (2010) 11 (1):27-38

# FIRST RECORD IN IRAQ OF *TANQUA ANOMALA* (LINSTOW, 1904) FROM THE DICE SNAKE, *NATRIX TESSELLATA TESSELLATA* (LAURENTI, 1768)

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# ABSTRACT

*Tanqua anomala* (von Linstow,1904) specimens were recovered, from the lining wall of the gastro-intestinal tract of the dice snake *Natrix tessellate tessellate* (Laurenti, 1768) collected in Baghdad city, central Iraq. Measurements of the males, females and a comparison of the nematode with other studies tabulated. Reporting of *Tanqua anomala* from this snake represents the first record for Iraq as well as a new host record.

# INTRODUCTION

Reptiles are commonly infected by a wide range of parasites, serving either as their definitive or intermediate hosts.

Reptiles of Iraq encountered a hundred species, including forty one species of snakes (Reed and Marx, 1959; Mahdi and George, 1969; Afrasiab, 1987;Afrasiaband Ali, 1988; 1989 a, b and Leviton *et al.*, 1992). Surprisingly, little attention had been paid to their parasites, the papers on parasitic fauna of Iraqi reptiles are rather few and fragmentary.

Marinkelle and Al-Mahdawi (1980) described the Protozoan Trypanosoma turcici from the gecko Hemidactylus turcicus. Al-Barwari and Nassir (1983) recorded the nematode Thelandros sp. From Hemidactylus flaviviridis and H. Persicus. Kugi and Mohammad (1988) described the cestodes: Oochoristica nupta from the lizard Agama nupta and isolated Oochoristica agama from Uromastix microlepis. Hassan and Abdullah (1989) isolated the cestodes: Oochoristica truncata from Agama ruderata and Ophisops elegans; the cestode Oochoristica tuberculata and the two nematodes Thelandros micipsae and Thelandros sp. were isolated from Ceratopodium scaberium (=Gymnodactylus scaber). Salih and Rahemo (1989) recovered Cysticercoid of Joyeuxiella sp. from the wall lizards: C. scaberium and Phyllodactylus elisae. Rahemo and Ami (1993) isolated the cestode Ophiotaenia europea from Natrix tessellata. Fattohy and Al-Zubaidy (1994) reported the protozoa Balantidium duodeni from Hemidactylus flaviviridis and the Cysticercoid of the genus Joyeuxiella from Trapelus (= Agama) ruderata; H. flaviviridis; Ophisops elegans and Phyllodactylus elisae and Thelandros micipsae from T. ruderata; C. scaberium; H. flaviviridis and O. elegans; and Thelandros sp. From T. ruderata; C. scaberium and O. elegans and the nematode Salobrella sp. from C. scaberium; H. flaviviridis and O. elegans. Al-Hadithi and Abdl-Majeed(1989)

recovered the nematodes, Pharyngodon laevicauda from H. turcicus, Thelanderos micipsae from C. scaberium; H. flaviviridis and Physalopteroid sp. from H. turcicus. Al-Zako (1999), reported four nematodes from three reptilian hosts: *Camallanus* sp. from the tortoise Testudo graeca; Neopharyngodon sp. from the geckos C. scaberium and Thelandros vittata and Trispiculascaris sp. from the lizard Mabuya vittata. Al-Saadi (2002) isolated the nematodes: Thelandros micipsae from C. scaberium; H. flaviviridis and H.turcicu; Thelandros sp. from H. turcicus and C. scaberium and the nematode Neopharyngodon sp. from H. flaviviridis and C. scaberium. Among four reptilian hosts Al-Hashimi (2006) reported six parasites, two trematodes: Telorchis cyclemmids from Mauremys (=Clemmys) caspica and Bilorichis indicum from Rafetus euphraticus; two cestodes Oochoristica sp. and Crepidobothrium sp. from Natrix tessellata and two nematodes Camallanus sp. And Trispiculascaris sp. from Mabuya aurata. From seven species of Iraqi reptiles, nine species of helminthic parasites were encountered by Al-Barwari and Saeed (2007), the digenetic trematode Telorchis stunkardi from the turtle Mauremys c. caspica; the cysticercoid of Diplopylidium nolleri from the geckos: Asaccus elisae, Hemidactylus flaviviridis, H. persicus and from thes nake Spalerosophis d. cliffordi; and 7 nematode species, Angusticaecum holopterum and Atractis dactyluris from the tortoise Testudo g. Iberia (= terrestris); Camallanus microcephalus from Mauremys c. caspica; Falcaustra japonensis from the turtle Rafetus(=Trionyx) euphraticus; Tachygonetriani colleri from Testudo g. terrestris; Thelandros sp. From Acanthodactylus elisae, H. flaviviridis, H. persicus and Microtetrameres sp. from H. flaviviridis..

The nominate dice snake, *Natrix tessellate tessellata* (Laurenti, 1768), distributed from Middle and Southern Europe through Western Asia to western China including India, Persia, Iraq, Syria and Egypt (Boulenger, 1920; Arnold and Burton, 1978 and Baran and Atau<sup>"</sup>r, 1998). It is present throughout Iraq with remarkably wide distribution in rivers, lakes, channels and marshes (khalaf, 1959 and Mahdi and George, 1969). The studies of parasite communities of this snakein Iraq are rare and scanty. This paper deals with recording the nematode *Tanqua anomala* from the gastro-intestinal tract of this snake for the first time in Iraq and it also constitutes a new host record as well.

# MATERIALS AND METHODS

A total of 28 adult specimens of the Dice snake *Natrix tessellate tessellate* were collected at Diyala Bridge, Baghdad City, Central Iraq during the period January to November 2008. The snakes were transferred to the laboratory a live, sacrificed and dissected as soon as possible. All viscera were removed and each placed in Petri dish with normal physiological saline. The recovered nematodes fixed and stored in 70% alcohol and cleared by lactophenol. Helminth identification was based on (Yamaguti, 1961;York and Maplestone, 1962).

All measurements of the nematodes are with millimeters (mm) unless otherwise stated. Images were taken with digital camera; drawings were made with aid of a camera Lucida. Helminth specimens were deposited in the collection of Iraq Natural History Research Center and Museum \University of Baghdad \ Baghdad \ Iraq.

# **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Gnathostomidae *Genus:Tanqua* Blanchard, 1904 *Tanqua*, R. Blanchard, 1904 (= *Ctenocephalus*, v. Linst., 1904) (Baylis, 1916). *Tanqua anomala* (v.Linst.) Baylis,1916 *Tanqua anomala* (Linstow 1904) Synonyms: *Heterakis anomala* vonLinstow,1904(Baylis, 1939)

Blanchard (1904) erected the genus *Tanqua* to accommodate the nematode *Ctenophorus tiara* (originally named *Ascaris tiara*). Baylis(1916) reviewed and amended von Linstow's description of *T. tiara*, described *T. anomala* and confirmed that *T. diadema* Linstow, 1904 was a valid species, and gave a key to separate between *T. tiara* and *T. diadema*.

The species belong to the genus *Tanqua* were identified in several monitors (Jacobson, 2007). Worldwide, nine species of this genus have been described from reptilian and amphibian hosts: *Tanqua bainae*; *T. geoclemydis*; *T. gigantica*; *T. herpestis*; *T. occlusa*; *T. ophidis*; *T. tiara*; *T. sindensis* and *Tanqua* sp.

Twenty males and eighteen females of *Tanquaanomala* were collected from the gastrointestinal tract of 28 snakes. The worm is of medium sizefound embedded its head in the inner mucous lining wall of the gastro-intestinal tract of the snake. Head with two relatively large lips, dorsal and ventral, each bearing on its inner side three rounded tooth – like projections, head –bulb is relatively small, divided externally into two swellings separated by lateral longitudinal grooves, the head bulb is provided with rows of thorn-like spines which help this nematode to attach with the host tissue, that makes its removal rather difficult. There is a cuticular collar behind the head – bulb, there are four elongated cervical sacs extend from anterior margin of cervical collar they appears to open separately upon the surface of the swellings at the base of the lips, the esophagus long, simple slender increasing gradually in diameter posteriorly (Fig.1 A&B) Posterior end of the body provided with series of muscle-bands on each side of the ventral surface, ending at front of the anus.

Measurements of 20 male and 18 female worms were done with an ocular micrometer and means were tabulated.

Male Fig.(2):Twenty males were isolated from the gastrointestinal tract of the snake, the body is attenuated towards the posterior ends. On the tail there are eight pairs of ventro-laterally sessile caudal papillae, they are different in sizes: three preanals, one adanal and four Postanals, the last pair is very small; the largest pair is the seventh from posterior end. The two curved ventrally spicules are with blunt ends, they are similar, equal in length and spiny, tail tapering to point with caudal alae.

Female: Fig. (3): Eighteen females were isolated from the snake. They are larger than males. Posterior end of the body has a short tail, which bears a pair of papillae, the vulva is nearer for the posterior end, it situated at about the posterior third of the body, oviparous, eggs oval, with thin shells and fine granulations, tail is short, tapering and pointed.

Table 2 shows a slight differences in present nematode measurements from that of Baylis (1939) and Dewi *et al.*,(2008), it could be due to the difference of host species and their habitat ecosystems since the nematodes of Baylis (1939) were isolated from the water snake *Tropidonotu spiscator* in India and Ceylon and specimens of Dewi *et al.*, (2008) were isolated from the intestine of the semi-aquatic snake *Acrochordus javanicus* in south Sumatra/Indonesia.

The description of *T. anomala* by Baylis (1916) was brief for the nematode which isolated from the stomach of *Tropidonotu spiscator* in ceylon, and confirmed that *T. diadema* Linstow, 1904 is a valid species for *T. anomala*, and gave a key to separate between *T. tiara* and *T. diadema*. In 1939 from the same host in India and Ceylon Baylis described *T. anomala* and gave detailed descriptions and dimensions for males and females.

Table.1: Measurements of	T. anomala (von	Linstow,	1904)Baylis1939	; Dewi
et al.,2008 and the	present study.			

Measurements	<i>T. anomala</i> (Baylis, 1939)	<i>T. anomala</i> (Dewi et al., 2008)	<i>T. anomala</i> (present study)	
Body length ♂	26.5 - 50.0	25.0 - 39.5	30 (12-42)	
9	30.1 - 56.0	33.6 - 43.9	38 (27-50)	
Body maximum width ♂		0.49–0.89	0.79 - 1.09	
	0.95-2	0.67-0.94	0.89 -1.22	
Oesophagus ♂	3.0 – 5.3 (not separated between	3.224 - 5.798	2.882- 3.118	
9	d and $ Q$ )	3.454 - 4.238	3.575- 4.195	
Spicules	1.3 – 1.7	0.745 – 1.326	0.520-1.65	
Vulva (from posterior	1/3	1/3.72	1/3.44	
Eggs (µm)	65 x 50	50 x 38	70 x 50	

This worm was reported from the water snake *Natrix piscator* (=*Tropinodonotus piscator*) (Baylis,1939;Sinha and Sahay, 1972; Soota and Chaturvedi, 1974; Rao et

*al.*, 1977; Naidu, 1978; Kalyankar and Kankal, 1980; Lakshmi, *et al.*, 1985 and Kankal, 1989) from the snake *Natrix stolatus* (Soota and Chaturvedi, 1973; Saharan and Sinha, 1974), Nama (1974) reported a single immature female *Tanqua anomala* from the body-cavity of amphibian host *Rana tigrina*. From the snake *Cerberus rhyncopus* it was isolated in Pakistan (Bilqees and Rehana, 1975), from the stomach of *Natrix* sp. by Gupta and Duggal (1981) and in India from the colubrid snake *Atretium schistosum* by Lakshmi *et al.* (1985).

Table 2 shows that females generally larger than males.

Recently Dewi *et al.*(2008) isolated and redescribed *T. anomala* from the intestine of the semi-aquatic snake *Acrochordus javanicus* in south Indonesia and to resolve the confusion of the status of *T. anomala* and to clarify the taxonomic position of the two species(*T.anomala* and *T.ophidis*) they used the scanning electron microscopy (SEM), and as a result of comparison between these two species according to the morphological features they confirmed that *T. anomala* as a valid species and *Tanqua ophidis* Johnston & Mawson, 1948 falls in synonymy with it. This agree with Gupta and Duggal, (1981) who regarded that *T. ophidis* is as junior synonym for *T. anomala*.

Measurements	Males	Females
Body (L x w)	30 x 7.0	38 x 1.0
Head (L x w)	0.23 x 0.25	0.25 x 0.30
Oesophagus(L x w)	3.0 x 0.40	3.7 x 0.44
Cervical sac (L)	0.50	0.54
Excretory pore from anterior end	0.72	0.83
Nerve ring (L x w)	0.09 x 0.18	0.09 x 0.19
nerve ring from anterior end	0.40	0.44
Spicule	1.08	-
Eggs (L x w) (µm)	-	70 x 50
Vulva (from posterior end)	-	13
Tail(L)	0.60	0.80

Table.2:	Means	of	measurements	for	males	and	females	of	T.anomal	a (	von
Linstow,	1904).										

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Kartika Dewi and Amir Hamidy from the Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense, Bogor/ Indonesia, to Dr. Isam Saeed from the University of Copenhagen / Denmark, and to Prof. Farhan T. Mhaisen for sending papers.

From Iraq Natural History Research Center and Museum / University of Baghdad, the author is very grateful to Prof. Mohammad K. Mohammad, the director, for supporting the diagnosis of nematodes, Khalida Ibrahim for her kind assistance in laboratory work and to Mohammad I. Ghazwan, for collecting the snakes.

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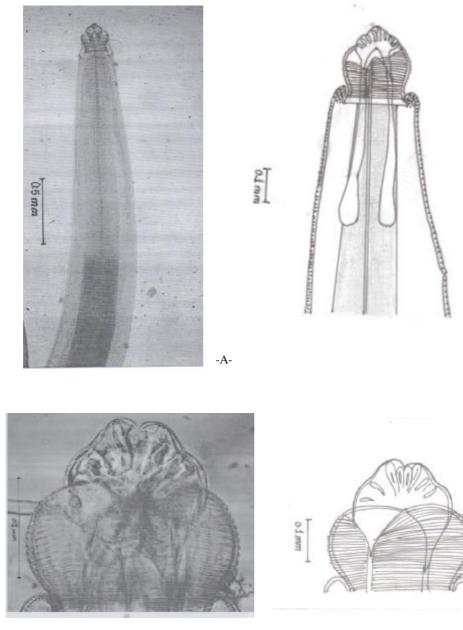
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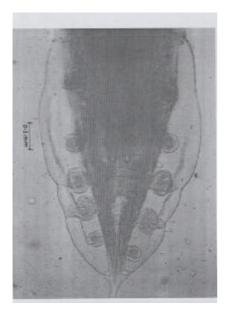
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First Record in Iraq of Tanqua nomala



-B-

Fig.1: A- Anterior end of *Tanqua anomala*. B- Head –bulb.



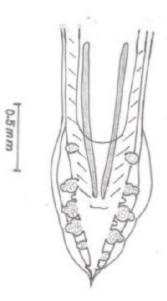


Fig. 2: Posterior end of male Tanqua anomala.



Fig. 3: Posterior end of female Tanqua anomala



*Bull. Iraq nat. Hist. Mus.* (2010) 11 (1): 27-38

تسجيل لأول مرة في العراق (Linstow, 1904) ش ن م شمير أول مرة في العراق (Linstow, 1904)

الماع (Laurenti, 1768) الماع Natrix tessellata tessellata

أز هار أحمد الموسوي مركز بحوث و متحف التأريخ الطبيعي جامعة بغداد ـ بغداد ـ العراق البريد الالكتروني: <u>ahmeda\_09@yahoo.com</u>

الخلاصة

تم عزل الدودة المدورة من الغشاء المبطن للقناة الهضمية لحية حنش الماء Tanqua anomala من مدينة بغداد وسط العراق. تم وصف هذه المدورة ومقارنة القياسات بين الجنسين كما تمت مقارنتها مع القياسات المذكورة لها في الدر اسات العالمية السابقة. يعتبر تسجيل هذه المدورة هو الأول في العراق كما سجلت في هذه الدراسة الحية كمضيف جديد لها.