

ECOLOGICAL CORRELATES OF THE MEASURES OF LOUSE INFECTIONS OF THE HOUSE SPARROW (*PASSER DOMESTICUS*)

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During the period of 1968-1975 a total of 236 house sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) had been collected and examined for lice. Samples consisted of *Philopterus fringillae*, *Brueelia cyclothorax*, *Sturnidoecus ruficeps* and a few "stragglers". Statistical analyses were carried out to search for covariation between measures of infection and potential environmental factors such as host flocking behaviour, host sex, and season of collection.

Contrary to our expectations, *Philopterus fringillae* was significantly less prevalent in flocks than in singletons. Mean and median intensities tended to be higher in flocks than in singletons although these differences were not significant.

Prevalences, mean and median intensities of *Brueelia cyclothorax* did not covary with flocking behaviour of sparrows. After pooling all Phthirapterans together, prevalence was significantly higher in singletons than in flocks. Mean intensity was significantly higher in flocks, while median intensity showed non-significant differences only.

Measures of louse infections did not covary with host sex. The significant differences between the samples taken from flocks versus singletons were most characteristic to the winter samples, and less emphasised in the spring. There were no similar differences in the autumn samples, while the summer samples were too small for evaluation.