

# EVPC Paris 2023

Last 20 years in Veterinary Parasitology: trends and future

## Abstract book



P18. Current risk of dirofilariasis transmission in the Canary Islands (Spain) and its future projection under climate change scenarios .....	77
P19. Preliminary results of ecological niche modelling analysis of the risk of <i>Dirofilaria</i> infection in Serbia and its projection into the future .....	78
P20. Ecological niche modelling analysis of the risk of <i>Dirofilaria</i> infection in Greece and its projection into the future .....	79
P21. Current risk of dirofilariasis transmission in Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) and Balearic Islands (Spain) and 2080 projection .....	80
P22. Digestive helminths in badgers ( <i>Meles meles</i> ) from southeastern Spain .....	81
P23. Providing a better knowledge and comprehension of climate and environmental drivers of sand fly-borne diseases – the CLIMOS project.....	82
P24. <i>Echinococcus multilocularis</i> infection in a kulan from Slovakia .....	84
P25. A new highly performant competitive ELISA for the detection of <i>Besnoitia besnoiti</i> antibodies in cattle .....	85
P26. Tickarium, a core facility for tick rearing at the UMR-BIPAR .....	86
P27. Herd factors associated with levels of parasitism in alternative pig farms.....	87
P28. Flea resistance to fipronil: confirmation of metabolic detoxification through innovative HPLC dosage within fleas.....	88
P29. <i>Trypanosoma evansi</i> infection in Canary Islands: evolution and control.....	89
P30. Evaluation of different treatments against cryptosporidiosis on a cattle farm from the Canary Islands .....	90
P31. DISCONTTOOLS: research gaps for parasitic diseases of animals .....	91
P32. Barking Up the Right Tree on <i>Leishmania</i> Seroprevalence: shelter versus domestic dogs.....	92
P33. First assessment of the prevalence of haemosporidian infection of raptors in Greece.....	93
P34. Phlebotomine sand fly survey in a wildpark of an endemic area for <i>Leishmania infantum</i> infection in Central Spain .....	94
P35. First report of <i>Babesia vulpes</i> infection in Iberian wolf ( <i>Canis lupus signatus</i> ) from Northwestern Spain and its potential tick vectors.....	95
P36. Enteric helminth infection impairs the recall of memory CD8+ T cells after vaccination with a recombinant viral vector .....	96
P37. <i>Dermanyssus gallinae</i> : Comparison of its distribution between cage tiers and a questionnaire with particular emphasis on the control in layer farms.....	97
P38. Zoonotic findings of <i>Hyalomma marginatum</i> in northwestern Spain: horse serological response and human captures .....	98
P39. Serological study on detection of antibodies against <i>Anaplasma</i> spp. in cattle, Romania .....	99
P40. Detection of <i>Haemonchus contortus</i> with fluorescein-labeled peanut agglutinin staining and larval differentiation.....	100
P41. A thorough approach provides evidence for low diagnostic value of TgERP as an indicator for oocyst-derived infection.....	101
P42. <i>Toxoplasma gondii</i> Seroprevalence in pigs in Croatia .....	102
P43. Functional characterization of three G protein-coupled acetylcholine receptors in parasitic nematode <i>Trichinella spiralis</i> .....	103

## P22. Digestive helminths in badgers (*Meles meles*) from southeastern Spain

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### Background and aims

The Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*) is a generalist omnivorous mammal of nocturnal habits. Although less present in arid areas of the south of the Iberian Peninsula, it is becoming increasingly abundant, even in areas with human pressure (Zabala et al., 2002; Revilla et al., 2007). The aim of this work was to describe the parasitic population of the digestive tract of badgers from southeaster Spain.

### Methods

Thirty-three badger carcasses found roadkill in rural areas of the Region of Murcia were collected by the staff of “El Valle” Wildlife Rescue Center and analysed in the Veterinary Faculty for gastrointestinal parasites.

### Results

54.5% of the badgers were parasitized, 577 helminths were isolated, and 7 species were identified: *Aonchotheca putorii*, *Vigisospirura potekhina* and *Pterygodermatites affinis* (nematodes), *Diplopylidium* spp. and *Mesocestoides* spp. (cestodes), and *Prostorhynchus* spp. and *Oncicola* spp. (acanthocephalans). *A. putorii* was the parasite with the highest prevalence (36.4%), and *Diplopylidium* and *Oncicola* were only present in 3% of the animals. A previous study from the Mediterranean area (Torres et al., 2001) showed the only coincidence of *A. putorii* and *V. potekhina*, also with similar prevalences. However, this is the first description of *Diplopylidium* spp., *Oncicola* spp., *Prostorhynchus* spp. and *P. affinis* in badgers of the Iberian Peninsula.

### Conclusions

These nematodes would come to parasitize the badger by sharing habitat with other mesocarnivores such as the fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) or the genet (*Genetta genetta*). Alternatively, could have been assimilated during the ingestion of the parasites' host, for example a mouse (*Mus musculus*) or the common frog (*Pelophylax perezi*) since we found numerous parasites with indirect life cycle related to the trophic tendencies of the badger. These results may be relevant for the infection of other mesocarnivores with which badgers share parasitofauna and habitat, such as the Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*), an endangered species.