Original Research Article

Nematode Parasites of Anurans from Three Cocoa farms in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Abstract

The research was designed to investigate the parasitic fauna of Anurans from cocoa farms in Ondo state. Amphibians are one of the most threatened groups of vertebrates. Many reasons are attributed to the decline of amphibian species such as global warming, habitat destruction and modification, others include: exploitation, pesticide use, introduced species,ultraviolet-B radiation (UV-B), pollution, parasites and diseases. This research was designed to investigate the parasitic fauna of Anurans from cocoa farms in Ondo state. A total of 31 frogs from 4 genera, Hemisus, Ptychadena, Rana and Xenopus and 7 toads from 1 genus, Sclerophrys were examined. 9 frogs were collected from Oluwateru farm at Iwoye Village; 7 frogs were collected from Folorunso farm at Ako-Igbatoro and 15 frogs from Obodulu farm in Idanre. 5 toads were collected from Oluwateru farm at Iwove Village and 2 toads from Obodulu farm in Idanre. In all cases collection was done between 20:00 hrs and 05:00 hrs. Collected specimens were transported in sealed but ventilated containers to the laboratory where identification was done to species level. The frogs were anaesthetized until death in absolute chloroform soaked in cotton wool placed inside kill-jar for 3 minutes in the laboratory. The gastrointestinal tracts were cut open and the contents of the various sections were put into separate Petri dishes containing normal saline. The skin and the bladder were observed directly under a dissecting microscope for the presence of cysts and monogeneans. The parasites were fixed and preserved in 70% alcohol following standard procedure. Parasites recovered from the gastrointestinal tracts of the anurans include Cosmocerca ornata, Deising, 1861, Cosmocerca cummutata, Diesing, 1851 Paracosmocerca mucronata, Kung and Wu, 1945, Ampliceacum africanum, Taylor, 1924, Gendria liberrei Bain and Philipon, 1969and Chenospirura asturi Hsu, 1957 Others were Procamallus brevis Kung, 1948 and Camallanus dimotrivi Durette- Desset and Batcharov, 1974. Some of the parasites are zoonotic while a few others are established parasites of African fishes and water Birds raising probable public health concerns from the findings. Further works aimed at unravelling the biodiversity of hosts and parasites in the lush ecosystem of Ondo state, as well as identification of organisms involved in the life cycle are noted.

Key words: Anurans, Parasitic fauna, Cocoa farms, Ondo State, Nigeria

Introduction

Comment [1]: only skin and bladder? Intestine? lungs? cloaca?

- Comment [2]: - trematodes (), - nematodes () and - cestode).	es (
Comment [3]: delete these from the abstract. can be in text at a mention.	first
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Amphibians are a class of tetrapods that evolved from lobe-finned fish and primitive tetrapods about 340 million years ago (San Mauro et al., 2005). Anurans are usually less than 65 cm in length and most species breed in aquatic environments. The most common of them in tropical Africa are the Frogs (Ford and Cannatella, 1993; Rodel, 2000). They can be herbivorous or omnivorous and are consumed by both vertebrates and invertebrates. They are also used foras pest controller and play an important role as bio-indicators of ????(Gonwouo and Rodel, 2008). A parasitic organism lives on or in another organism (host) and obtains its food, protection, transportation and also performs its essential metabolism through the host. Monogeneans are, common parasites of fishes which, may externally infect aquatic life stages of amphibians. Some cestodes, acanthocephalans, and hirudineans may also reside on or in adults anurans, generally as internal infections (Johnson et al., 1999; Poynton and Whitaker, 2001). Many types of helminths may infect amphibians, but many nematodes or roundworms, are common helminths that infect amphibians from egg to adult stages and affecting a variety of organs and tissues. Anurans have the capacity to carry extremely high parasite loads. As a resource for parasitological studies, there has been a number of significant papers and reviews of parasite groups of amphibians over the past century (Baylis, 1929; Kerve, 1930; Walton, 1932; Walton, 1933; Southwell and Kirshner, 1937; Bain and Phillipon, 1969; Kiesecker, 2002; Ford et al., 2004). Some reports had been written about the parasites of Amphibians in Nigeria_by Thurston(1967, 1970), Avery (1970), Jackson and Tinslev (1995a, 1995b) and Aisien et al. (2001, 2003, 2004, 2009, 2010). but not as extensive as in some parts of the world. Interestingly, tropical Nigeria has a limited number of publications in this field and none seem to have been done in Ondo State, which is a typical rainforest region of the country. In this region, many humans consume some of the amphibian species and the latter can also be found insome relative abundance despite the associated threats. This present research investigated the nematode parasites of anurans found in some Cocoa farms in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

Ondo State is situated in the south western part of Nigeria with geographical coordinates of $5^{0}45$ 'N, $4^{0}20$ 'E and $7^{0}52$ 'N, $6^{0}05$ 'E (Wikipedia, 2014). The state is bordered by Ekiti State in the north, Osun State by the west, Edo State at the eastern end, Ogun State and the Atlantic Ocean in the southern area. The study sites were cocoa farms with fresh flowing stream, making them good sites for amphibian habitat. The three cocoa farms <u>investigated</u> where amphibians were collected include:

- a. Oluwateru Family Farm at Iwoye Village (7⁰25'N, 5⁰20'E), situated in Akure South Local Government Area (LGA), about 10 kilometres outside Akure township towards Ondo town
- b. Folorunso Family Farm at Ako-Igbatoro Village (7⁰09'N, 5⁰37'E), situated in Akure South LGA about 5 kilometres along Igbatoro road from Akure metropolis
- c. Obodulu Cocoa farm (7⁰24'N, 5⁰19'E), situated in Idanre LGA, around a rocky farmland in Idanre

Comment [6]: this is the most recent literature in the introduction. There are many more recent pub s on amphibians in Nigeria

Comment [7]:

The frogs and toads were collected between 20:00 and 05:00_hrs from in ponds, streams, underneath leaf litters and on trees by visual and acoustic encounter surveys. The specimens were handpicked and transported in sealed but ventilated containers to the Laboratory. Each container held specimens of about the averagely same size to prevent injury or death resulting from aggression. Safety precautions were put in place particularly against snake bites during collection by wearing thick boots and usage of hand gloves. Other measures were the included useage of whistles by all on site, keeping of bitter kola in the pockets (it is believed by the locals that it scares away snakes), useage of back packs instead of hand bags, sticks to remove leaf litters coupled with sharpened machetes and torch for proper illumination. A local who wais very familiar with each therespective areasite was engaged as a guide. An average of 12 specimens were collected per site. For proper identification, the specimens were first anaesthetized for 3 minutes in absolute chloroform soaked in cotton wool inside a kill-jar in the Laboratory. The smooth vein length (SVL) of each of the specimens were measured for taxonomic reasons and the sex of the animals were determined. The specimens were identified to the species level using identification keys by Rodel (2000). The specimens were examined for parasites 12 to 18 hours after collection. Dissections of the specimens were done 3-5 minutes after anaesthetizing so as to recover live parasites. The various sections of the gastrointestinal tract were cut out systematically i.e. the Stomach, Oesophagus, and the intestine and put inside separate Petri dishes with 9% saline solutions in Petri dishes. The organs were teased using dissecting needle to facilitate the escape of the parasites into normal saline, then the Petri dishes were examined under a dissecting microscope. The skin and the bladder were observed directly under a dissecting microscope to view the presence of monogeneans and cysts. The organs were teased using dissecting needle to facilitate the escape of the parasites into normal saline, then the Petri dishes were examined under a dissecting microscope. The parasites were lifted off the saline solution using Forceps/Pasteur pipette and placed inside another petri dish of saline solution before they were fixed for observation. The parasites were fixed in hot by placing each of them inside small sterilized stainless steel vials, containing 70% alcohol and the container heated to make the parasite stretch out from the usual coiled position. (Aisien et al., 2001; 2009; 2010). The preservation of the parasites was done by removing them from the hot alcohol and placing them inside vials containing 70% alcohol. The recovered nematodes were cleared in lactophenol (Aisien et al., 2001; 2009) followed by examination under the dissecting microscope. The nematodes were identified using taxonomic keys provided by Yamaguti (1961). The prevalence rate was calculated as a percentage of the number of a particular host species infected with the specific helminth parasite divided by the total number of hosts examined, and mean intensity of infection was taken as the total number of parasites per host, and this was done for the whole animal population collected either infected or uninfected (Anderson, 1993).

Ethical Considerations: Care were taken not to sacrifice more animals than necessary for the research following the standard procedures as established by the International Society of Applied

Comment [8]: no wonder you scared away the amphibians. Noise!!!

Comment [9]: too few

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Comment [12]: on the animal or cut out of the animal

Comment [13]: Parasites were preserved in 70 % alcohol Ethology (ISAE, 2002; Sherwin *et al.*, 2003). In addition to this, the study conformed with the practice of reducing the number of amphibians used in research work to the smallest minimum possible as proposed by Herpetological Animal Care and Use Committee (HACC) of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (Beaupre *et al.*, 2004).

Results

A total of 31 frogs and 7 toads_were collected from the sites. The species of_frogs encountered during the study were include: *Ptychadena longirostris* Peters, 1870, *Ptychadena mascareniensis* Dumeril and Birron, 1841, *Rana galamensis_Dumeril* and Bibroni, 1841, *Ptychadena retropunctata* Angel, 1949, *Xenopus muelleri* Peters, 1844, *Hemisus marmoratus* Peters, 1855, *Ptychadena bibroni* Hallowell, 1845 and *Ptychadena pumilio* Boulenger, 1920. The toads encountered were_*Sclerophrys maculata_Hallowell*, 1854 and *Sclerophrys pentoni_Anderson*, 1893.

The gut contents of Rana galamensis and Ptychadena spp were filled mostly with grasses and insects while Xenopus muelleri and Hemisus memoratus had tTadpoles in their gut. The contents were from the oOesophagus and the stomach while in the intestine, liquid to semi liquid matter was seen and could not be traced to any specific food substance. The gut contents of the Sclerophrysspp were insects e.g. grasshoppers, bugs and crickets. The contents were from the Oesophagus and the stomach while in the intestine, liquid or semi liquid matter were seen and could not be traced to any specific type of food substance. The gut contents were examined so as to help in knowing possible intermediate hosts of the parasites encountered. The parasites found in the alimentary canal of the frogs and toads were measured to help in taxonomic description and recorded (Table 1). They include: Cosmocerca cummutata Diesing, 1851, Cosmocerca ornata, Procamallus brevis Kung, 1948, Camallanus dimotriviDurette- Desset and Batcharov, 1974, Chenospirura asturi Hsu, 1957, Gendria liberrei, Paracosmocerca mucronata Kung and Wu, 1945, Ampliceacum africanum Taylor, 1924 and aAscaridoid larvae Blanchard, 1849. The parasites were all nematodes belonging to 3 Orders and 5 families(Fig. 1). Frogs in Idanre were more infected than the other locations as highlighted in Table 2 and Iwoye had the highest number of infected toads (Table 3). The mean intensity was generally between 0.75 - 3.75 except for Hemisus memoratus that had about 86 aAscaridoid larvae per host (Table 4). The overall prevalence for frogs recorded showed that Sclerophrys maculatahad the highest infection rate in the study.

Discussion

Comment [14]: Are you looking at stomach contents or checking for parasites?

Comment [15]: rephrase properly. Unless you ve found a new species, the life cycle of the parasites are known.

Comment [16]: ?. Is ascaridoid a genera? Comment [17]: delete 7 toads from genus *Sclerophrys* and 31 frogs belonging to 4 genera, *Hemisus, Ptychadena, Rana* and *Xenopus*were examined out of the several seen for conservation reasons. The prevalence of infection in the observed species when compared to earlier reports in tropical Nigeria (Aisien *et al.*, 2001 and 2009) showed that the frogs in this study had low worm burden. Previous studies from Nigeria also recorded the presence of cestodes and trematodes but only nematodes were encountered in this study.

Comment [18]: How many was seen? What percentage did you examine? Comment [19]:

Becos you examined very few

UNDER PEER

Table 1: Parasitic Species Recovered from Frogs and Toads_from Different body locationsSites

Parasites		Site		
	Frog	Toad	-	
Ampliceacum africanum	Nil	Sclerophrys maculata; Sclerophrys pentoni	Stomach, Oesophagus, Small intestine and Body Cavity	
Chenospirura asturi	Nil	Sclerophrys maculata	Small intestine	
Camallanus dimitrovi	Nil	Sclerophrys maculata; Sclerophrys pentoni	Stomach and Small intestine	
Cosmocerca cummutata	Ptychadena pumilio; Xenopus muelleri	Sclerophrys maculata	Small intestine	
Cosmocerca ornata	Ptychadena pumilio; Hemisus memoratus		Small intestine	
Procamallus brevis	Nil	Sclerophrysmaculata	Stomach and Small intestine	
Gendria liberrei	Nil	Sclerophrysmaculata	Small intestine	
Chenospirura asturi		Sclerophrysmaculata	Body Cavity	
Paracosmocerca mucronata	Nil	Sclerophrys pentoni	Body cavity	
Ascarididoid larvae	Hemisus memoratus; Ptychadena bibroni	nil	Small intestine	

Parasites	Host	Location							
		Iwoye		Ako-Igbat	oro	Idanre			
		Prevalenc e	Mean intensity	Prevalen ce	Mean intensity	Prevalen ce	Mean Intensity		
Cosmocerca cummutata	Xenopus muelleri	100%	1.00	-	-	-	-		
	Ptychadena pumilio		-	-	-	100%	2.00		
Cosmocerca ornata	Ptychadena pumilio	-	-	-	-	100%	2.00		
	Hemisus memoratus	-	-	-	-	50%	0.5		
Ascarididoid larvae	Hemisus memoratus		-		-	100%	86		
	Ptychadena bibroni	ノー		-		25%	0.25		

7

Table 2: Prevalence and Mean Intensity of Infection in Frogs at the Different Sites

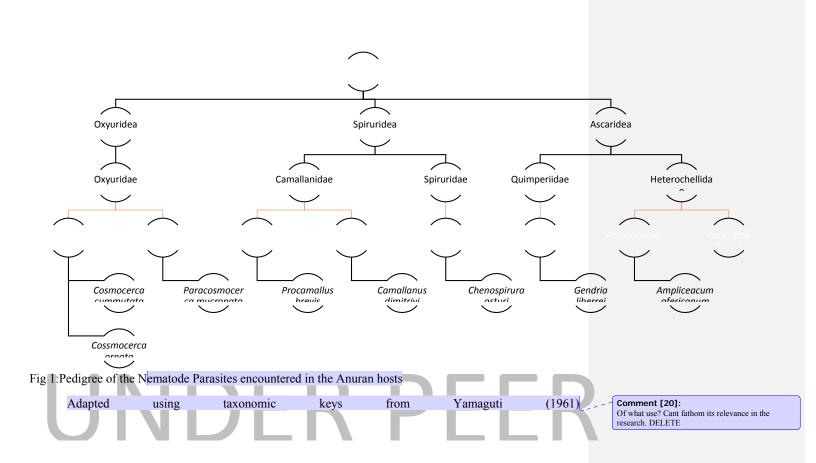


Table 3: Prevalence and Mean Intensity of Infection in Toads at the Different Sites

Parasites	Host				
		Iwo	ye	Idanre	
		Prevalence	Mean intensity	Prevalence	Mean Intensity
Ampliceacum africanum	Sclerophrys maculata	50%	0.75	50%	0.50
	Sclerophrys pentoni	-	-	100%	1.00
Camallanus dimitrovi	Sclerophrys maculata	50%	3.75	-	
	Sclerophrys pentoni	-	-	100%	3.00
Cosmocerca cummutata	Sclerophrys maculata	25%	1.75		-
Procamallus brevis	Sclerophrys maculata	25%	0.75	-	-
Gendria liberrei	Sclerophrys maculata	25%	0.50	-	-
Chenospirura asturi	Sclerophrys maculata	25%	1.25	-	-
Paracosmocerca mucronata	Sclerophrys pentoni	•	-	100%	1.00

9

Table 4: Overall	Prevalence	of infection	in the	examined Animals

Parasite Toad hosts Frog Host Species

	Sclerophrys maculata	Sclerophry s pentoni	Xenopus muelleri	Hemisus memoratus	Rana galamensis	P. bibroni	P. pumilio	P. retropunctata	P. longritoitis	P. mascarensis
Cosmocerca cummutata	-	-	11.11%		-	-	28.57%	-	-	-
Cosmocerca ornata	-	-	-	33.33%	-	-	14.29%	-	-	-
Ascarididoid larvae	-	-	-	33.33%	-	20%	-	-	-	-
Ampliceacum africanum	50%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Camallanus dimitrovi	33.33%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Procamallus brevis	16.67%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cosmocerca cummutata	16.67%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cosmocerca ornata	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ascarididoid larvae	-	U			P 1	_		•	-	-
Gendria liberre	i 16.67%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chenospirura asturi	16.67%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paracosmocerco mucronata	a -	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Two of the parasites *Gendria liberrei* and *Chenuspirura asturi* have been reported before in tropical Africa but are reported for first time in Nigeria in this study. The remaining parasites have been reported before in tropical Africa and in Nigeria. *Cosmocerca cummutata* recovered from the intestine of female *Ptychadena pumilio* in the Idanre farm had been reported in **Brazil** 2 and Europe as a parasite of North American frogs (Walton, 1933). Jit was reported in Congo (Vuylesteke, 1964), and in Northern Nigeria as parasite of *Xenopus muilleri* (Avery, 1970). Same parasite was also reported in Sudan as a parasite of *Sclerophrys regularis* and *Dicroglossus occipitalis* (Pike, 1979) and in Turkey as a parasite of the tree frog, *Hylaarborea*(Dusen and Oz, 2004). The report of this parasite in *Ptychadena pumilio* is new for the parasite.

Cosmocerca ornata was recovered from the gut of male *Hemisus memoratus* from the Idanre farm. Puylaert (1970), reported it in Senegal, Avery (1971), reported it in Nigeria from *Xenopus* spp, Baker (1981), observed it in South Africa from the native South African frogs. Pike (1981), reported it from *Dicroglossus occipitalis* and *Sclerophrys regularis* in Sudan, Moravec *et al.* (1987), described it in their findings in aAmphibian and reptile parasites in Egypt while Moravec and Barus(1990), encountered and reported it in Zambia and Uganda. Aisien *et al.* (2001 and 2009), also reported it in Nigeria from *Sclerophrys regularis*, *D. occipitalis*, *X. muelleri* and from *Hemisus memoratus*.

Paracosmocerca mucronata was only found in gotten from the intestine of the only Sclerophrys pentoniencountered in the study, Aisien et al. (2001),_reported it in Nigeria as a parasite of Xenopus muilleri., <u>T</u>this is the second time this parasite will be reported in another part of the <u>c</u>Country. Chenuspirura asturi was recovered from Sclerophrys maculata in Iwoye farm. Hsu (1957), reported the parasite as a parasite of water <u>b</u>Birds. Camallanus dimitrovi recovered from Sclerophrys pentoni has been reported extensively in the West African axis of the tropics_ in Togo. (Durette-Desset and Bacharov (1974), reported it in Togo in a general review of amphibian parasites, Jackson and Tinsley (1995a) reported it in Nigeria from Xenopus spp (Jackson and Tinsley 1995a) and <u>in Nigeria from Dicroglossus occipitalis</u> and Hoplobatrachus occipitalis. Procamallanus brevis which was recovered from Sclerophrys maculata_in this study_research was first reported in Tanzania (Baylis, 1929) and <u>later by</u> Avery (1971) reported it in the northern part of Nigeria, and in both cases it was recovered from Xenopus spp.

Ampliceacum africanum, recovered from the toads <u>S_clerophrys</u> maculata and <u>S_clerophrys</u> pentoni, was first reported from the mountainous region of the present day Tanzania from Sclerophrys maculata_(Baylis, 1929). Baker (1987), reported it<u>'s presence inin his synopsis of</u> the nematode parasitic in amphibians and reptiles, from some East and West African countries whileand Aisien *et al.* (2001), established its occurrence in Nigeria in<u>S_clerophrys</u> maculata and <u>D. occipitalis. Gendria liberrei</u> was_recovered from <u>S_clerophrys</u> maculata_but. Bain and Phillipon (1969)_recorded it_, reported the latter in Togo as a parasite of tilapia fish. This is the first time the parasite will be reported as a parasite of <u>S_maculata</u> in Nigeria.

Comment [21]: Any photos or drawing of what was identified?

Comment [22]: What is the significance of the different hosts

Comment [23]: rephrase

This paragraph could be rewritten to bring out the fact that the hosts of this parasite is varied in different areas. Was it found in same body organ? Same % and intensity?

The life cycle of *Cosmocerca cummutata, Cosmocerca ornata,* and *Paracosmocerca mucronata* of the family Oxyuridae_starts <u>withby</u> the female producing thousands of eggs in the large intestine of its host making its host's rectum itch. The host scratches the area and transfers the eggs to the mouth where they travel to the intestine. Another way <u>of infection</u> is by retrofection where eggs that are not transferred to extremities will hatch and crawl back into the intestines (Schmidt and Roberts, 1989). Olsen (1986), reported that *Chenuspirura asturi* a Spiruridae, undergoes indirect life cycle by using an arthropod intermediate host, most especially bugs or grasshoppers, while frogs and other vertebrates_serve as definitive hosts.

The life cycle of *Camallanus dimitrovi* and *Procamallus brevis*of family Camallanidae involves a cyclopoid copepod crustacean as an intermediate host where development continues in the intestines of a vertebrate namely freshwater fishes and turtles (Schmidt and Roberts, 1989). Females with fully developed first-stage larva burst from cheeks of a definitive host, releasing the larva, which are eaten by copepods that are then eaten by a definitive host (Olsen, 1986). Fertilization occurs when migrating from intestines of the definitive host to its head, after which all the males die (Schmidt, 1992). *Ampliceacum africanum* and Ascarididoid larvae of the family Quimperiidae undergo viviparous direct life cycle in the stomach of the host. *Gendria liberrei* lays egg inside the host (Olsen, 1986) and the eggs of this nematode can be effectively transferred from its natural host to a paratenic host i.e. amphibians and reptiles through the bite of Black flies which dwells in fast flowing streams with the natural hosts (fishes)Bain and Philipon (1969).

The reported pathological effects of the parasites vary. Olsen (1986), reported that *Cosmocerca cummutata* and *Paracosmocerca mucronata*_changes the host's colour, causes ulceration and corrosion of alimentary canal. *Chenuspirura asturi* escalates the effects of other helminths and obstructs the intestinal passage, leading to serious mechanical damages_(Olsen, 1986). *Camallanus dimitrovi*causes lesions, haemorrhage, mechanical damage, and associated diseases (Olsen, 1986; Schmidt and Roberts, 1989). The recorded pathological effects of *Procamallanus brevis*are lesions, haemorrhage, mechanical damage, and associated diseases whereas, *Ampliceacum africanum*, causes major_lesions and mechanical obstruction leading to a kwashiorkor like appearance of the host (Olsen, 1986). Ascarididoid larvae causes varying degree of mechanical damages depending on the numbers and stages of development while *Gendria liberrei* has no recorded pathological effect on the hosts.

Some of the observed parasites are zoonotic. *Cosmocerca cummutata*,_*Paracosmocerca mucronata*, *Chenuspirura asturi* and *Ampliceacum africanum*_are zoonotic (Olsen, 1986). *Gendria liberrei* generally are parasites of African fishes and associated animals. Dwellers and Farmers in the farm areas are prone to zoonotic infections since they get in contact with the

Comment [24]: How does this relate to your work? You can relate it by considering the gut content as part of the life cycle and source of infection

Comment [25]: pls relate this to your work to make relevant

Comment [26]: you had 86. what does it mean to the host?

Comment [27]: explain where they have been found in man and under what circumstance Comment [28]: but you found it in toad. what do you think

happened?

anurans through various activities like farming, hunting (some of the anurans are edible), fishing in the streams especially during rainy seasons.

Conclusion

The current study has described for the first time, the parasitic fauna of amphibians from the tropical rainforest of Ondo State, Nigeria and probable public health concerns from the findings Further works aimed at unravelling the biodiversity of hosts and parasites in the lush ecosystem, as well as identification of organisms involved in the life cycle continues.

Comment [29]: are they eaten raw Explain how infection can come to man by fishing

Comment [31]: delete

swimming and touching the toad.

Comment [30]: too brief. Should include the major highlights of the study

Competing Interests

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Comment [32]: . Correct references according 1 and 2. 2. Cite references with [number] as they appear in the Ms. See authors guidelines 3. List references as they appear numbering from 1,2 etc 4. Make sure all cited refs are listed. 5. for wikipedia give the link

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