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A Faunistic Survey of Cercariae from Fresh Water Snails: *Melanopsis* spp. and their Role in Transmission Diseases

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Abstract:

Snail transmitted diseases are one of the major group of helminth parasitic diseases which have been established by trematode parasites. The larvae of trematodes (cercariae) use the snails as host. The purpose of the present study was to identify of cercariae released from *Melanopsis* spp. (*M. doriae*, *M. costata*, *M. praemorsa*, and *M. nodosa*) and evaluate their medical importance. Accordingly, 2, 266 *Melanopsis* spp. (fresh water snails) were collected from various agriculture canals in the central area of Khuzestan Province in the south west of Iran. 72 (3.1%) infected *Melanopsis* spp. snails were isolated and the cercariae were obtained by emerging or crushing methods. Subsequently, measurement and drawing were made on cercariae specimens and recognized. In some cases experimental infections were established in the animals for further identification. A total of 4 cercarial families and 1 cercarial group were identified as follows: Heterophyidae: *Haplorchis pumilio*, *H. taitui*, *Stellantchasmus falcatus* and *Centrocestus formosanus*; Echinostomatidae: *Echinochasmus milvi*; Cyathocotylidae, Philophthalmidae and Monostome group cercariae (probably *Notocotylidae*). These results have been recorded for the first time and these cercariae are of medical and veterinary importance.

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