

## Research Note

 Some digenetic trematodes found in a loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*) from Brazil

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## Article info

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## Summary

This paper reports three recovered species of digeneans from an adult loggerhead sea turtle - *Caretta caretta* (Testudines, Cheloniidae) in Brazil. These trematodes include *Diaschistorchis pandus* (Pronocephalidae), *Cymatocarpus solearis* (Brachycoeliidae) and *Rhytidodes gelatinosus* (Rhytidodidae). The first two represent new geographic records. A list of helminths reported from the Neotropical region, Gulf of Mexico and USA (Florida) is presented.

**Keywords:** *Caretta caretta*; loggerhead turtle; trematodes; Brazil

## Introduction

During the last century sea turtle populations worldwide have been declining mostly due to human activities, but also due to natural dangers, such as predation and infections caused by several pathogens, like parasites. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the loggerhead turtle is considered a vulnerable species and all the populations of sea turtles have become threatened (IUCN, 2017). Therefore, it is important to study these factors in order to know its impact on these threatened species. Studies of the helminth fauna from sea turtles have already been carried out for many years and, possibly, loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) are the most studied species, with a large number of parasites already reported in different parts of the world (Sey, 1977; Aznar *et al.*, 1998; Werneck *et al.*, 2008; Valente *et al.*, 2009; Santoro *et al.*, 2010; Gracan *et al.*, 2012; Karaa *et al.*, 2019; Greiner, 2013). However, in Brazil a small amount of research on loggerhead sea turtles parasites has been done (Werneck & Silva, 2016; Werneck *et al.*, 2018; Werneck *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the present article brings new knowledge on loggerheads' trematodes parasites from Brazil.

## Material and Methods

In March 22, 2014 an adult female loggerhead sea turtle measuring 97.9 cm in curved carapace length was found in the Camburi beach (20° 16' 0.120" S, 40° 16' 59.880" W), municipality of Vitória in the state of Espírito Santo, Brazil. The turtle was found dead on the beach during a monitoring expedition and it was frozen. At necropsy, performed in April 29, 2014 several trematodes were found in the stomach. The contents were cleansed and concentrated with sieves (mesh sizes: 0.3 mm and 0.150 mm) and examined under a stereomicroscope. The parasites were placed in a Petri dish, preserved in 70 % alcohol, stained with carmine, and cleared with eugenol. Morphometric data was collected with the aid of a Global optics microscope using the S-EYE software program. Measurements are reported in micrometers, except when indicated, with the mean and standard deviation followed by the range in parenthesis. The analyses of the parasites were authorized by federal licenses for activities with scientific purposes (SIS-BIO 30600–1). The helminths were deposited in the Helminthological Collection of the Instituto Oswaldo Cruz in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (CHIOC).

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The classification used in this report followed the taxonomic proposal presented by the World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS, 2020).

### Ethical Approval and/or Informed Consent

For this study formal consent is not required.

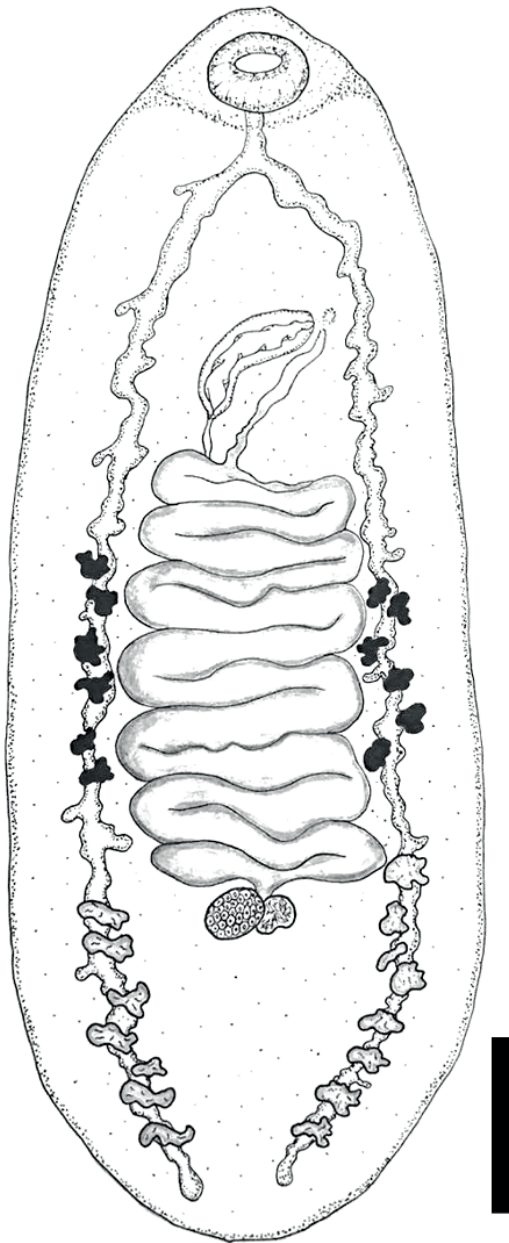


Fig. 1. *Diaschistorchis pandus* (Braun, 1901) Johnstone, 1913 (Digenea: Pronocephalidae) found in a loggerhead turtle from Brazil, ventral view (scale bar = 1.0 mm)

### Results and Discussion

Three species of digeneans including 23 *Diaschistorchis pandus* (Pronocephalidae), 36 *Cymatocarpus solearis* (Brachycoeliidae) and 2 *Rhytidodes gelatinosus* (Rhytidodidae) were found in the stomach of the loggerhead turtle. The first two trematodes have new geographic records.

#### TREMATODA

##### Family: Pronocephalidae Looss, 1899

1. *Diaschistorchis pandus* (Braun, 1901) Johnstone, 1913 (Fig. 1)

Site of infection: stomach.

Voucher specimen deposited: CHIOC 38973.

Remarks: This trematode has been found in loggerheads sea turtles from Australia (Braun, 1901), USA (Pratt, 1914; Greiner, 2013), Egypt (Sey, 1977) and Tunisia (Karaa *et al.*, 2019). In Green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) from Australia (Johnstone, 1913), USA (Greiner, 2013). In Halksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) from Australia (Johnstone, 1913) and India (Chattopadhyaya, 1972; Mehrotra & Gupta, 1976). In the Neotropical region (Central and South America), this trematode was already found in green sea turtles from Brazil (Werneck & Silva, 2015), in hawksbills sea turtles from Bermuda (Barker, 1922), Cuba (Vigueras, 1955), Puerto Rico (Fischthal & Acholonu, 1976; Dyer *et al.*, 1995) and Brazil (Werneck *et al.*, 2015) and loggerhead sea turtle from Brazil (present report).

Measurements: (n = 23) Body  $7.75 \pm 1.07$  (6.46 – 9.33) mm long by  $3.23 \pm 0.35$  (2.83 – 3.66) mm wide; oral sucker  $961.9 \pm 143.8$  (727 – 1,201) long by  $984 \pm 143.9$  (871 – 1,220) wide; testis number  $16.6 \pm 0.89$  (16 – 18); ovary  $318 \pm 48.0$  (252 – 364) long by  $342.8 \pm 82.4$  (232 – 430) wide; cirrus sac  $680.4 \pm 109.6$  (575 – 900) long by  $225.3 \pm 54.5$  (156 – 302)

The morphological characteristics are compatible with the taxonomic key proposed by Blair (2005a) and Mehrotra and Gupta (1976), comparisons were made with the article by Dyer *et al.* (1995). Our specimens are comparable to those described, except the size of the body width and oral sucker, that are larger than those reported by Dyer *et al.* (1995).

##### Family: Brachycoeliidae Looss, 1899

2. *Cymatocarpus solearis* (Braun, 1899) Braun, 1901 (Fig. 2)

(probably Synonym: *Cymatocarpus undulatus* Looss, 1899)

Site of infection: stomach.

Voucher specimen deposited: CHIOC 38975.

Remarks: According to Blair and Limpus (1982), *C. solearis* has already been found in loggerheads sea turtles from the Mediterranean coast of Egypt and from USA (Florida) (Looss, 1899; Linton, 1910; Pratt, 1914; Luhman, 1935), in olive ridleys from Japan (Oguro, 1942) and green sea turtles from Mexico (Caballero, 1959). In Brazil it has already been reported in green sea turtles (Werneck & Silva, 2015), hawksbills sea turtles (Werneck *et al.*, 2015) and in loggerhead sea turtle (present report).

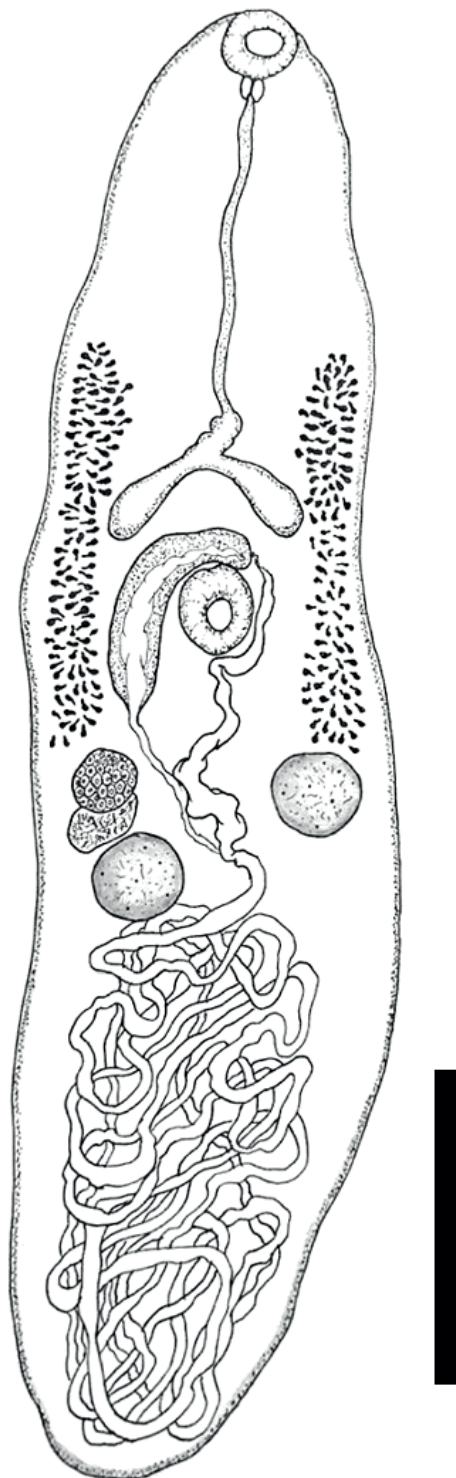


Fig. 2. *Cymatocarpus solearis* (Braun, 1899) Braun, 1901 (Digenea: Brachycoeliidae) found in a loggerhead turtle from Brazil, ventral view (scale bar=1.0 mm)

**Measurements:** (n = 36) Body  $4.86 \pm 0.83$  (3.36 – 5.89) mm long by  $1.30 \pm 0.12$  (1.12 – 1.47) mm wide; oral sucker  $198.3 \pm 50.1$  (133 – 245) long by  $231.5 \pm 55.2$  (161 – 291) wide; ventral sucker  $262.5 \pm 46.7$  (171 – 301) long by  $275.2 \pm 55.9$  (196 – 327) wide; pharynx  $275.7 \pm 187.6$  (157 – 492) long by  $72.5 \pm 25.5$  (46 – 107) wide; oesophagus  $1,094.8 \pm 149.3$  (936 – 1296) long by  $79 \pm 18.7$  (61 – 98) wide; anterior testis  $249.2 \pm 56.2$  (183 – 310) long by  $238.7 \pm 50.0$  (168 – 290); posterior testis  $256 \pm 60.7$  (176 – 338) long by  $249.6 \pm 30.3$  (217 – 281); ovary  $204.3 \pm 64.2$  (142 – 321) long by  $208.5 \pm 49.8$  (118 – 267) wide

The morphological characteristics are compatible with the taxonomic key proposed by Pojmanska (2008) and comparisons were made with the article by Blair and Limpus (1982), Caballero (1959) and Grano-Maldonado and Álvarez-Cadena (2010). The morphometric analyses of our specimens are comparable to those described by Blair and Limpus (1982) and Caballero (1959) although they were larger than largest fluke by Grano-Maldonado and Álvarez-Cadena (2010). Principal variations occurred for the size of ventral sucker, pharynx and ovary from those described by Blair and Limpus (1982).

**Family: Rhytidodidae Odhner, 1926**

3. *Rhytidodes gelatinosus* (Rudolphi, 1819) Looss, 1901 (Fig. 3)

Site of infection: stomach.

Voucher specimen deposited: CHIOC 38974.

Remarks: *R. gelatinosus* is a wide distributed trematode. It has been reported from loggerheads sea turtles, green sea turtles and hawksbill sea turtles, from Mediterranean sea, Morocco, USA, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Panama, India, Pakistan, New Guinea and Australia (see revision in Blair & Limpus 1982), also reported in loggerheads sea turtles from Brazil (Viana, 1924; Travassos *et al.*, 1969, present report), Egypt (Looss, 1901; Looss, 1902; Sey, 1977), USA (Greiner, 2013), . More recently in Italy (Manfredi *et al.*, 1998; Santoro *et al.*, 2010; Gracan *et al.*, 2012) and Portugal (Madeira Archipelago); Valente *et al.*, 2009), in green sea turtle from Brazil, (Werneck & Silva, 2015).

**Measurements:** (n=2) Body  $5.31$  (4.94 – 5.68) mm long by  $1.27$  (1.20 – 1.34) mm wide; oral sucker  $355$  (318 – 392) long by  $469$  (403 – 535) wide; pharynx  $180$  (160 – 200) long by  $167$  (147 – 187) wide; oesophagus  $834$  (676 – 992) long by  $76$  (73 – 79) wide; acetabulum  $234.5$  (214 – 255) long by  $187$  (181 – 193); ovary  $175$  (169 – 181) long by  $225$  (204 – 246) wide; cirrus sac  $309$  long by  $183$ ; anterior testis  $249.2 \pm 56.2$  (183 – 310) long by  $238.7 \pm 50.0$  (168 – 290); posterior testis  $371$  (338 – 404) long by  $272.5$  (244 – 301);

The morphological characteristics are compatible with the taxonomic key proposed by Blair (2005b) and the original description by Looss (1901). Our specimens are similar to those described by Blair and Limpus (1982), except that they are smaller.

Published information concerning species of parasites of the loggerhead from the Neotropical region, Gulf of Mexico and USA (Florida) is summarized in Table 1 and Table 2. The present report

Table 1. Digeneans identified in loggerhead turtle from the Neotropical region, Gulf of Mexico and Florida.

	Locality	Reference
<b>Trematoda</b>		
<b>Aspidogastridae</b>		
<i>Lophotaspis vallei</i>	Brazil, USA	Luhman, 1935; Araujo, 1941; Greiner, 2013
<b>Brachycoelidae</b>		
<i>Cymatocarpus solearis</i>	Brazil, USA	Linton, 1910; Pratt, 1914; Luhman, 1935; Greiner, 2013; Present report;
<b>Calycodidae</b>		
<i>Calycodes anthos</i>	Brazil, USA	Wemeck et al., 2008; Greiner, 2013
<b>Gorgoderidae</b>		
<i>Plesiochorus cymbiformis</i>	Brazil, USA	Pratt, 1914; Cary, 1930; Luhman, 1935; Greiner, 2013; Wemeck et al., 2018.
<b>Pachypsolidae</b>		
<i>Pachypsolus irroratus</i>	USA	Linton, 1910; Greiner, 2013
<i>Pachypsolus tertius</i>	Gulf of Mexico	Pratt, 1914
<b>Plagiorchiidae</b>		
<i>Enodiotrema carettae</i>	USA	Greiner, 2013
<i>Enodiotrema megachondrus</i>	Brazil	Wemeck et al., 2019
<i>Pachypsolus tertius</i>	USA	Linton, 1910; Greiner, 2013
<b>Pronocephalidae</b>		
<i>Cricocephalus americanus</i>	USA	Linton, 1910
<i>Diaschistorchis ellipticus</i>	Gulf of Mexico	Pratt, 1914
<i>Diaschistorchis pandus</i>	Brazil, USA	Greiner, 2013; Present report
<i>Pleurogonius longiusculus</i>	Brazil, USA	Luhman, 1935; Ernst and Ernst, 1977
<i>Pleurogonius trigonocephalus</i>	Brazil, USA	Luhman, 1935; Ernst and Ernst, 1977; Greiner, 2013
<i>Pronocephalus trigonocephalus</i>	Brazil	Viana, 1924
<i>Pyelosomum chelonei</i>	USA	Greiner, 2013
<i>Pyelosomum renicapite</i>	Brazil, USA	Luhman, 1935; Wemeck et al., 2008; Greiner, 2013
<b>Rhytidodidae</b>		
<i>Rhytidodes gelatinosus</i>	Brazil, USA	Viana, 1924; Travassos et al., 1969; Luhman, 1935; Greiner, 2013; Present report
<i>Rhytidodes secundus</i>	USA	Pratt, 1914; Luhman, 1935
<b>Spirochiidae</b>		
<i>Amphiorchis</i> sp.	USA	Dutton, 2019
<i>Carettacola bipora</i>	USA	Manter and Larson, 1950; Stacy et al., 2010; Greiner, 2013

<i>Carettacula</i> sp.	USA	Jacobson et al., 2006
<i>Haplotrema mistroides</i>	USA	Greiner, 2013; Dutton, 2019
<i>Haplotrema synorchis</i>	Florida	Luhman, 1935
<i>Haplotrema pambanensis</i>	USA	Stacy et al., 2010
<i>Monticellius indicum</i>	Brazil	Werneck et al., 2017
<i>Neospororchis pricei</i>	USA	Manter and Larson, 1950; Stacy et al., 2010; Greiner, 2013
<i>Neospororchis</i> sp.	USA	Jacobson et al., 2006
<b>Styphlotrematidae</b>		
<i>Styphlotrema solitaria</i>	USA	Luhman, 1935; Greiner, 2013
<b>Telorchhiidae</b>		
<i>Orchidasma amphiorchis</i>	Argentina, Brazil, USA	Linton, 1910; Manter, 1931; Luhman, 1935; Boero and Led, 1974; Werneck et al., 2008; Greiner, 2013

Table 2. Nematodes and Cestodes identified in logghead turtle from the Neotropical region, Gulf of Mexico and Florida.

	Locality	Reference
<b>Nematoda</b>		
<b>Angiostomatidae</b>		
<i>Angiostoma carettae</i>	USA -	Burse and Manire, 2006; Manire et al., 2008
<b>Anisakidae</b>		
<i>Sulcascaaris sulcata</i>	Uruguay, Brazil, USA	Lent and Teixeira de Freitas, 1948; Werneck et al., 2008; Greiner, 2013
<b>Cucullanidae</b>		
<i>Cucullanus carettae</i>	USA	Greiner, 2013
<b>Kathlianidae</b>		
<i>Kathiania leptura</i>	Brazil, USA	Werneck et al., 2008; Greiner, 2013
<b>Cestoda</b>		
Trypanorhynch cysts	USA	Greiner, 2013

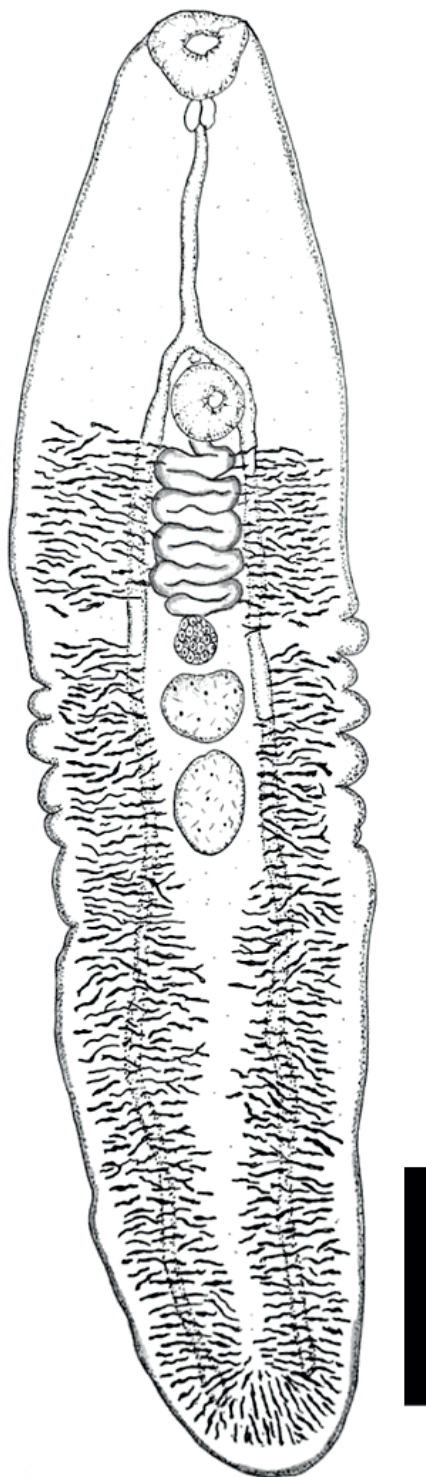


Fig. 3. *Rhytidodes gelatinosus* (Rudolphi, 1819) Looss, 1901 (Digenea: Rhytidodidae) found in a loggerhead turtle from Brazil, ventral view (scale bar=1.0 mm).

contributes to the knowledge on marine loggerheads helminth fauna and their geographical distribution.

### Acknowledgments

BW is involved in veterinary medicine activities and develops specific consulting work of which one of the main aims is to disseminate scientific study results to contribute to the conservation of marine organisms.

### Conflict of Interest

Authors state no conflict of interest.

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