ON THE OCCURRENCE OF

*Pthirus pubis* (Linnaeus, 1758) Leach, 1815

ON A BUFFALO (Bubalus bubalis)

The genus Pthirus Leach, 1815, includes *P. pubis* (Linnaeus, 1758) Leach, 1815 — the crab louse of man and *P. gorillae* Ewing, 1927 — an imperfectly known species described from egg and first state nymph recovered from gorilla.

*P. pubis* occurs in many parts of the world and infests usually the pubic and peri-anal regions, occasionally the axilla, beard, moustache, chest, abdomen, thighs, eyebrows and eyelashes and rarely the head. It is restricted to man as the host; but Nuttall (1918) had two instances to record its incidence on dogs in Africa and America and Bedford (1936) recovered it from a chimpanzee in Africa. Nuttall (*loc. cit.*) opined that the collection of ten adults from the axilla of a dog in Africa rendered it evident that *P. pubis* had found a fairly suitable host besides man, whereas Ferris (1951) stated that the above occasional records were not anything more than incidental.

In the course of routine examination of clinical materials in the Department of Parasitology, Madras Veterinary College, a collection of ectoparasites recovered from the base of the tail of a she-buffalo was surprisingly found to be referable to *P. pubis*. There were seven specimens — 6 adults (4 males and 2 females) and one nymph. As *P. pubis* had not so far been encountered on buffaloes, a detailed examination of the material was made to confirm the identity. The louse is easily recognised by its characteristic appearance. The males (Fig. 1) measure 1.2 — 1.3 mm. and the females (Fig. 2) are 1.74 — 1.76 mm. long. It is greyish white in colour and nearly as broad as long. Legs I are small and slender with fine long claws and Legs II and III are long and thick with stout short claws ending in knobs. The abdomen is short, broader than long and compressed longitudinally. The spiracles of the III, IV and V segments lie almost in a transverse line. The segments bear lappet like processes at the sides progressively increasing in size posteriorly.
Further investigation is needed to determine if the buffalo can also serve as a natural host for *P. pubis*.

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**REFERENCES**


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ON THE OCCURRENCE OF \textit{PHTHIRUS PUBIS} (LINNAEUS, 1758)
LEACH, 1815 ON A BUFFALO (BUBALUS BUBALIS)

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig1}
\caption{Photomicrograph of \textit{phthirus pubis} - Male.}
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\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig2}
\caption{Photomicrograph of \textit{phthirus pubis} - Female.}
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