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Cestodes infections in the European hedgehogs, *Erinaceus europaeus*

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The European hedgehog is a synanthropic mammal, widely distributed in Europe (Mariacher et al., 2021). The natural habitat of this species is represented by the edges of deciduous or mixed woods, but it is also very common in suburban and rural areas, mainly in gardens and public parks (Mizgajska-Wiktor et al., 2010).

Hedgehogs are omnivorous in diet, and they mainly feed on invertebrates, such as slugs, earthworms, beetles, caterpillars and other insects. These invertebrates can act as intermediate or paratenic hosts for several parasites of the hedgehog, for instance *Hymenolepis erinacei*: (Naem et al., 2015). Additionally, some parasite species recorded in the hedgehog may show a zoonotic potential, such as *Mesocestoides* spp.: (Kirillov et al., 2022).

The helminth fauna of European hedgehog includes only two species of cestodes. Table 1 provides an overview of cestodes detected in European hedgehogs in different European countries.

Rasmussen et al. (2021) examined livers of European hedgehogs (n=94) for *Echinococcus multilocularis* to determine whether the hedgehog could be an intermediate host of this species. Hedgehogs carrying *E. multilocularis* could potentially contribute to sustain the infection in the wild. This appears to be the first targeted investigation of *E. multilocularis* in European hedgehogs. They did not detect any *E. multilocularis* in the hedgehog livers. They therefore consider it unlikely that European hedgehogs are hosts of *E. multilocularis*.

Table 1. Presence of cestodes in the European hedgehogs, *Erinaceus europaeus*.

Species	Country	Anatomical location	References
Hymenolepis erinacei (syn. *Rodentolepis erinacei*)	Germany, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Greece	Small intestine	Schütze (1980); Timme (1980); Boag and Fowler (1988); Keymer et al. (1991); Pantchev et al. (2005); Pfaffle et al. (2014); Liatis et al. (2017
Mesocestoides spp. (larvae)	Italy	Digestive tract	Giannetto et al. (1993); Poglayen et al. (2003)

References are available from the Authors.