

## Cestodes from birds in Africa: an overview

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Two and a half centuries ago, in 1772, the Dutch naturalist Martinus Houttuyn published the description of the new tapeworm species *Taenia struthionis*, an intestinal parasite of the common ostrich (*Struthio camelus*) from “Africa”. To our knowledge, this is the first description of a cestode species from an African bird. We summarised the information on cestode parasites in birds in Africa published in 1772–2022 in 177 works. The data of 434 cestode species belonging to 147 genera, 14 families and 3 orders are presented. For each species, the valid name, the synonyms used in the literature for Africa, bibliographic reference to the original records, names of the hosts and data on the geographical distribution on the continent are included. The cestode orders Diphyllbothriidea and Tetrabothriidea are represented by one and seven species, respectively.

The order Cyclophyllidea is represented by 426 species belonging to 146 genera and 12 families. The most species-rich families are Davaineidae (118 species), Hymenolepididae (105), Dilepididae (86) and Paruterinidae (50). In total, 333 species of birds belonging to 76 families and 27 orders have been recorded as hosts of cestodes in Africa. A host–parasite checklist is presented. The cestode complexes detected in avian orders are characterised by high levels of host specificity. The degree of knowledge of the avian cestode fauna of Africa is considered fragmentary and insufficient. It varies across countries, with the maximum number of species recorded in Egypt (112 species) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (104 species). There are no records of avian cestodes for 19 African countries.