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Author(s)	OOI, Hong-Kean; OHBAYASHI, Masashi
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BRIEF COMMUNICATION

***REIGHARDIA STERNAE*, A PENTASTOMID
FROM A SLATY-BACKED GULL IN
HOKKAIDO, JAPAN**

Hong-Kean OOI and Masashi OHBAYASHI

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Only two pentastomid species which infect birds as their definitive host have been recorded: *Reighardia sterna* (DIESING, 1864) WARD, 1899 and *Reighardia lomviae* DYCK, 1975. The latter was reported from guillemot *Uria aalge* in Northern Europe (DYCK, 1975), whereas *R. sterna* has been found in gulls, terns and alcids in various localities of Europe, Russia, China, North America and Brazil. Hitherto, no pentastomids from birds have ever been reported in Japan.

A sub-adult (about 2 years old) slaty-backed gull, *Larus schistisagus* STEJNEGER, caught in Zenibako, Hokkaido, in February 1982, was found to harbour 8 large worm-like parasites in the thoracic cavity and the lungs. In addition, a small, mobile specimen was recovered from the abdominal cavity. Showing a cylindrical body without annulation and 2 pairs of small hooks each surrounded by inconspicuous parapodial lobes, the large specimens were identified as the adult female of *Reighardia sterna* and the small specimen as the male parasite. The length of the female specimens was 51.6-71.1 mm, and the male specimen measured 5.7 mm. All the female specimens were gravid. The specimens were in agreement with the description of the adults of *R. sterna* by HEYMONS & VITZTHUM (1936) and RILEY (1973) and also with the description of the embryo by OSCHER (1963).

BAKKE (1972) reviewed the literature on the occurrence of *R. sterna* and made a list of the following hosts: *Larus argentatus*, *L. canus*, *L. dominicanus*, *L. hyperboreus*, *L. philadelphia*, *L. ridibundus*, *Pagophila eburnea*, *Sterna hirundo*, *S. paradisaea*, *Rissa tridactyla*, *Hydroprogne tschegrava*, *Chlidonias hybrida* and *C. leucopterus*. To this list can be added *Sterna fluviatilis* (FAUST, 1927), *S. macrura* (HEYMONS & VITZTHUM, 1963), *Uria aalge* and *Fratercula artica* (THRELFALL, 1971), *Larus fuscus* (RILEY, 1970), *L. atricilla* and *L. delewarensis* (PENCE, 1973). Thus the present finding of *R. sterna* in *L. schistisagus* presents a new host record for this parasite. This is also the first record of a pentastomid from birds in Japan.

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EXPLANATION OF PLATE

Figs. 1-3 *Reighardia sterna*e

- Fig. 1 Male on the left, female on the right. Note the black hematin in the intestine. A: Anterior end, P: Posterior end
- Fig. 2 Embryo. BC: Blastoderm cuticle, IN: Intestine, PD: Pore of dorsal organ
- Fig. 3 Cross section of the integument of mature female. Note the presence of columnar integumentary bodies. IB: Integumentary bodies PAS-Haematoxylin stained

