

THE PHENOMENON OF MORPHOLOGICAL INVERSIONS IN THE ONTOGENY OF SOME PALEARCTIC SPECIES OF IXODID TICKS (ACARI: IXODIDAE)

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ABSTRACT - Morphological inversions in the ontogeny of ixodid ticks are expressed as disturbances of species-specific tendencies of some external structures in the development of the maternal line. Concrete variants of inversions covering the broad spectrum of structures which serve as differential attributes for similar species are described. Inversions form species-specific attributes, maintained within the limits of an area, and are integral to all ontogeny. The cause of inversions is universal for all ixodid ticks and is revealed in pasture-type parasitism by such features of morpho-ecological specialization as hypertrophy, gigantism and growth of integument during feeding, leading to an imbalance in the development of morphological structures during ontogeny. The value of morphological inversions for systematic investigation of ixodid ticks is discussed.

Key words - Acari, Ixodidae, ontogeny, morphological inversions, systematics.

Abstract # 10

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