

**OBSERVATIONS ON ORIBATID MITES (ACARI: ORIBATIDA) SERVING AS
INTERMEDIATE HOSTS OF *MONIEZIA EXPANSA* (CESTODA:
ANOPLOCEPHALIDAE) IN IRAN**

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ABSTRACT - Preliminary observations on oribatid mites, intermediate hosts of tapeworms of the family Anoplocephalidae, based on mites collected from soil and grass samples from Mazandaran province in the north of Iran, showed that *Galumna iranensis* Mahunka and Akrami, 2001, *Galumna karajica* Mahunka and Akrami, 2001 and *Scheloribates fimbriatus* Thor, 1930 harbored cysticercoids. Therefore, it is likely that they may act as natural vectors of anoplocephalids. Subsequently these mite species were used for artificial infection with *Moniezia expansa* eggs. Fully developed cysticercoids were recovered only in *S. fimbriatus*, 35 days after incubation at $28 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ and $90 \pm 5\%$ RH. The percentage of infection was 70.8, and average and maximum number of cysticercoids per mite was 1.9 and 6.0, respectively. No mite eggs were found in infected mites.

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