

**Taxonomic revision of the genus *Gyrodactylus* (Monopistocotyla: Gyrodactilidae) from freshwater fishes in Bulgaria**

Nina Vencheva Vancheva

PhD Thesis (Summary)

The aim of the present study was to analyse the species composition, geographical distribution and host specificity of the helminths of the genus *Gyrodactylus* from freshwater fishes in Bulgaria. The revision was based on specimens from the Helminthological Collection of the Institute of biodiversity and ecosystem research at the Bulgarian academy of sciences (IBER–BAS). New material from *Gyrodactylus* was collected during to course of the study and was analysed using a combined approach of morphological and molecular methods. A DNA-analysis was carried out using target-specific primers for the region ITS1-5.8S-ITS2 of the ribosomal DNA. The study confirmed the presence of 22 species of *Gyrodactylus* in freshwater fishes from Bulgaria. Additional 3 species, previously unreported, were found during the revision of the collection specimens. Another 3 species were recorded based on the newly collected specimens, two of which are parasites of invasive freshwater fishes. In total, 6 species were reported for the first time for the fauna of Bulgaria. The study does not confirm the presence of 9 species, which were either not present in the collection, or the quality of the microscopic slides did not allow for proper identification, or were re-identified as different species on the basis of their morphological features.