

1 New optional intermediate hosts of *Mothocya parvostis* (Isopoda: Cymothoidae): Juveniles of the
2 cobaltcap silverside *Hypoatherina tsurugae* (Atheriniformes: Atherinidae) and the yellowfin
3 seabream *Acanthopagrus latus* (Perciformes: Sparidae)

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36 **Abstract**

37 *Mothocya parvostis* (Isopoda: Cymothoidae) is a crustacean that infests the opercular cavities of
38 fishes. Its main definitive host is Japanese halfbeak *Hyporhamphus sajori*. However, *M. parvostis*
39 also infests black sea bream *Acanthopagrus schelgelii* as an optional intermediate host. Hence, to
40 infest not only definitive hosts but also optional intermediate hosts; this is important for understanding
41 the life history of Cymothoidae, and further information should be obtained. In this study, 20 and 144
42 cymothoids (mancae and juveniles, respectively) were collected from 129 cobaltcap silversides
43 *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and 494 yellowfin seabreams *Acanthopagrus latus*. Molecular analysis of the
44 cytochrome *c* oxidase subunit I gene and 16S rRNA genes revealed that cymothoid mancae and
45 juveniles from the two fish species were identified to be *M. parvostis*. *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and *A.*
46 *latus* juveniles were optional intermediate hosts of *M. parvostis*. *Mothocya parvostis* mancae infested
47 juveniles of both species just after metamorphosis, grew with the host, and detached from the fish as
48 juveniles continued growing. The parasitic status of *M. parvostis* in the three optional intermediate
49 hosts indicated that *M. parvostis* likely reproduced from June to December, and different optional
50 intermediate hosts were used depending on the time of year in Hiroshima Bay. Therefore, a parasitic
51 strategy involving optional intermediate hosts might increase the infestation success of *M. parvostis*
52 to *H. sajori*.

53
54 **Keywords:** Life cycle, Manca, New host record, Parasitic cymothoid, Prevalence

55
56 **BACKGROUND**

57 Cymothoidae Leach, 1818 covers 363 species and 42 genera of cosmopolitan isopod parasites
58 (Boyko et al. 2008 onwards). Their hosts include diverse taxa of fish inhabiting marine, brackish, and
59 freshwater environments (Yamauchi 2016). These parasites attach to their hosts at four sites:
60 opercular cavity, buccal cavity, abdominal cavity, and body surface (Smit et al. 2014). During their
61 life cycle, free-swimming mancae (larvae) grow into juveniles and adult males on the hosts (Smit et
62 al. 2014). Adult cymothoids change their sex from male to female (Smit et al. 2014), but cymothoids
63 are mainly identified on the basis of the morphological characteristics of adult females; thus,
64 morphology-based species identification is difficult, and molecular analysis is by far the only way to
65 identify species in mancae, juveniles, and males (Fujita et al. 2021).

66 Belonging to Cymothoidae, *Mothocya parvostis* Bruce, 1986 infests Japanese halfbeak
67 *Hyporhamphus sajori* (Temminck and Schlegel, 1846) as a major definitive host (Nagasawa 2020),
68 and it shows a high prevalence of approximately 50% (Kawanishi et al. 2016; Fujita et al. 2020). It
69 also infests the large-scale blackfish *Girella punctata* Gray, 1835 and the Japanese amberjack *Seriola*
70 *quinqueradiata* Temminck and Schlegel, 1845 as definitive hosts (Bruce 1986). In Hiroshima Bay, it

71 infests juveniles of black sea bream *Acanthopagrus schlegelii* (Bleeker, 1854) as an optional
72 intermediate host (Fujita et al. 2020). Optional intermediate hosts are unnecessary in a parasite's
73 normal life cycle. *Anilocra apogonae* Bruce, 1987 also has optional intermediate hosts (Fogelman
74 and Grutter, 2008). An optional intermediate host is similar to a *paratenic host*, but parasites do not
75 grow on paratenic hosts (Okulewicz et al. 2012). *Acanthopagrus schlegelii* juveniles are optional
76 intermediate hosts rather than paratenic hosts because *M. parvostis mancae* grow in black sea bream
77 juveniles (Fujita et al. 2020). In addition to *A. schlegelii*, no optional intermediate hosts of *M.*
78 *parvostis* have been found.

79 The reproduction cycles of Cymothoidae organisms vary; *Anilocra pomacentri* Bruce, 1987 has no
80 fixed reproduction season and reproduces throughout the year (Adlard and Lester 1995); *Mothocya*
81 *epimerica* Costa, 1851 has four reproduction seasons per year (Bello et al. 1997). The reproduction
82 cycles of *M. parvostis* are unknown, but they can also reproduce at other times of the year than Fujita
83 et al. (2020) (from June to August); that is, juvenile fishes that appear at other times may be used as
84 optional intermediate hosts. Thus, we focused on juveniles of the yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus*
85 *latus* (Houttuyn, 1782), a related species of *A. schlegelii* that appears in Hiroshima Bay in seasons or
86 periods that differ from that of *A. schlegelii*. *Acanthopagrus latus* is recreationally and commercially
87 important in the Indo-West Pacific region as *A. schlegelii* (Iwatsuki 2013). One of the most significant
88 ecological differences between *A. latus* and *A. schlegelii* is their spawning season. In particular, *A.*
89 *latus* spawns in autumn (Abol-Munafi and Umeda 1994; Nishida 2022), whereas *A. schlegelii* spawns
90 in spring (Kawai et al. 2017 2020 2021). We also focused on the juveniles of cobaltcap silverside
91 *Hypoatherina tsurugae* (Jordan and Starks, 1901) that grow in the period between the growth seasons
92 of *A. schlegelii* and *A. latus*. In the ecosystem, *H. tsurugae* serves as a food source for various
93 carnivorous fishes (Mori et al. 1988) and can be the subject of recreational fishing. Its spawning
94 season in coastal Japan is from May to July, and its juveniles are collected from June to October (Mori
95 et al. 1988).

96 In this study, we performed DNA analysis to identify the cymothoids infesting juveniles of *H.*
97 *tsurugae* and *A. latus* as *M. parvostis*. *Mothocya parvostis* infested these two species in different
98 seasons from its infestation in *A. schlegelii*; thus, we updated our knowledge about the optional
99 intermediate hosts and parasitic strategies of *M. parvostis*.

100

101 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

102 **Sample Collection**

103 A total of 129 *H. tsurugae* and 494 *A. latus* juveniles were collected from 6 July 2021 to 14 October
104 2021 and from 27 October 2021 to 8 January 2022. Sampling was performed using hand, surf, and
105 casting nets on the coast of Nomijima Island, Hiroshima Bay, Seto Inland Sea, Japan. In the case of

106 *H. tsurugae*, individuals smaller than 75 mm, which corresponds to zero age (Mori et al. 1988), were
107 considered juveniles. In the case of *A. latus*, individuals smaller than 160 mm were considered
108 juveniles because they were qualified as immature (Hesp et al. 2004). The collected fish and
109 cymothoids were preserved in 99.5% ethanol.

110 The standard length (SL) of the fish and total length (TL) of the cymothoids were measured. The
111 life stages of the cymothoids were divided into mancae, juveniles, and adults, following Aneesh et al.
112 (2016) and Fujita (in press). The prevalence of *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus* was calculated by dividing
113 the number of the infested fishes by the total number of the collected fishes. The “manca-prevalence”
114 and “juvenile-prevalence” was calculated by dividing the number of fishes infected at each respective
115 cymothoid stage by the total number of the collected fishes of *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus*. If a single
116 fish was infested by mancae and juveniles, it was included in the estimation of both manca- and
117 juvenile-prevalence.

118

119 Molecular identification

120 A total of 20 cymothoids from *H. tsurugae* juveniles and 19 cymothoids from *A. latus* juveniles were
121 randomly selected for molecular analyses. Total DNA was isolated from pereopods via an alkaline
122 lysis method (Toyobo 2012).

123 Analyses and species identification were performed following Fujita et al. (2020). Partial
124 cytochrome *c* oxidase subunit I gene (COI) sequences were amplified using the primers LCO1490
125 (5'-GGTCAACAAATCATAAAGATATTGG-3') and HCO2198 (5'-
126 TAAACTTCAGGGTGACCAAAAATCA-3') (Folmer et al. 1994), and partial 16S rRNA
127 sequences were amplified using the primers 16Sar (5'-CGCCTGTTTAACAAAACAT-3') and
128 16Sbr (5'-CCGGTCTGAACTCAGATCATGT-3') (Simon et al. 1994). The total volume for each
129 PCR was 8.1 µL, which was composed of 1 µL of DNA, 0.78 µL of ultrapure water, 4.06 µL of 2×
130 PCR buffer, 1.62 µL of dNTP mix, 0.24 µL of each primer (10 µM solutions), and 0.16 µL of KOD
131 FX Neo DNA polymerase (Toyobo, Osaka, Japan). The thermocycler profile of COI involved an
132 initial denaturation at 94°C for 2 min; 30 cycles of denaturation at 98°C for 10 s, annealing at 50°C
133 for 45 s, and extension at 68°C for 30 s; and a final extension at 68°C for 7 min. The thermocycler
134 profile of 16S rRNA consisted of an initial denaturation at 94°C for 2 min; 30 cycles of denaturation
135 at 98°C for 10 s, annealing at 50.5°C for 30 s, and extension at 68°C; and a final extension at 68 °C
136 for 7 min. The PCR products were sequenced via the dye terminator method by using an ABI 3130xl
137 genetic analyser (Applied Biosystems, CA, USA).

138 The sequences were aligned using MUSCLE (Edgar et al. 2004), implemented in MEGA 10 (Kumar
139 et al. 2018), trimmed, and collapsed into haplotypes. All sequences were deposited in GenBank.
140 Additional sequences belonging to *Mothocya*, which is distributed in Japan, were downloaded from

141 GenBank (Supplementary Table S1). The sequences of *Anilocra* Leach, 1818, *Ceratothoa* Dana, 1852,
142 and *Nerocila* Leach, 1818, which are relative genera of *Mothocya* within Cymothoidae (Hata et al.
143 2017) that inhabit the waters of Japan (Supplementary Table S1), were included to compare genetic
144 distances within and between species. Pairwise intra- and interspecific genetic distances with the
145 Kimura two-parameter (K2P) model (Kimura 1980) were calculated using MEGA10, and a
146 neighbour-joining tree (Saitou and Nei 1987) was generated using COI and 16S rRNA sequences.
147 *Ichthyoxenos japonensis* Richardson, 1913 (NC 039713 and MF419233) was also included as
148 outgroups.

149

150 **RESULTS**

151 Cymothoids infesting *H. tsurugae*

152 In this study, six mancae and 14 juveniles of Cymothoidae were collected from the opercular
153 cavities of 129 *H. tsurugae* juveniles (Figs. 1 and 2). Of the 16 infested fishes, only three were
154 simultaneously infested by more than two cymothoid individuals. The SL of *H. tsurugae* juveniles
155 increased with each sampling day (Fig. 3); however, the TL of cymothoids did not significantly
156 correlate with the SL of *H. tsurugae* juveniles (Fig. 4). The prevalence of cymothoids in *H. tsurugae*
157 increased with each sampling day and reached a maximum of 20.8% (Fig. 5). The manca-prevalence
158 did not change significantly during the sampling season, but the juvenile-prevalence increased (Fig.
159 5). In the manca- and juvenile-prevalence in terms of the length range of fish, the manca-prevalence
160 in small fish (<20 mm) was 50%; as the fish grew, it decreased, but the juvenile-prevalence increased
161 (Fig. 7).

162

163 Cymothoids infesting *A. latus*

164 A total of 80 mancae and 64 juveniles of Cymothoidae were collected from the opercular cavity of
165 494 *H. tsurugae* juveniles (Figs. 1 and 2). Of the 138 infested fishes, only seven were simultaneously
166 infested by more than two cymothoid individuals. The SL of *A. latus* juveniles increased with each
167 sampling day (Fig. 3). The TL of cymothoids was significantly correlated with the SL of *A. latus*
168 juveniles (Fig. 4). The prevalence of *A. latus* did not significantly change during the sampling period
169 (Fig. 5). However, after mid-December, the manca-prevalence decreased, whereas the juvenile-
170 prevalence increased, and all cymothoids identified in early January were juveniles (Fig. 5). The
171 manca-prevalence in terms of the length range of fish was 33.3% (<10 mm); as the fish grew, it
172 decreased, but the increased. Furthermore, almost all cymothoids infesting large *A. latus* juveniles
173 (>20 mm) were juveniles (Fig. 6).

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175 Molecular identification

176 Our alignment matrices of the COI and 16S rRNA genes consisted of 594 and 412 bp, representing
177 seven and eight haplotypes, respectively. Our neighbour-joining tree with COI and 16S rRNA genes
178 showed that all haplotypes detected from cymothoids infesting *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus* formed a
179 well-supported clade, along with the sequence identified as *M. parvostis* by Hata et al. (2017) and
180 Fujita et al. (2020) (Fig. 7).

181 Pairwise intra- and interspecific genetic distances with the COI and 16S rRNA haplotypes revealed
182 intraspecific distances smaller than the interspecific distances (Tables 1 and 2), but no overlapping
183 was observed between them. The minimum interspecific distances within *Mothocya* were 3.1% and
184 1.9% before and after the inclusion of haplotypes from this study, respectively. The maximum
185 distances between our haplotypes were 1.0% (COI) and 0.8% (16SrRNA). These values were
186 comparable with the intra- and interspecific distances of *Anilocra*, *Cerathothoa*, and *Nerocila* (Tables
187 1 and 2).

188

189 Discussion

190 Cymothoid parasites, including *M. parvostis*, have been described on the basis of the morphological
191 traits of adult females; thus, morphological identification is almost impossible in other life stages and
192 in males (Fujita et al. 2021). Fujita et al. (2020) morphologically identified and described adult *M.*
193 *parvostis* females from *H. sajori*, a major definitive host, and deposited their COI and 16S rRNA
194 sequences in GenBank. In the present study, cymothoids were collected from *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus*,
195 thereby forming a clade that encompasses an existing sequence previously identified as that from *M.*
196 *parvostis* (Hata et al. 2017; Fujita et al. 2020). The intraspecific genetic distances between our
197 collections and the sequence of *M. parvostis* from GenBank were lower than the interspecific genetic
198 distances within *Mothocya*. Thus, the cymothoid specimens collected from *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus*
199 were identified as *M. parvostis*. *Mothocya parvostis* was previously observed in the opercular cavity
200 of *H. sajori*, *G. punctata*, and *S. quinqueradiata* as definitive hosts (Bruce 1986) and *A. schelgelii* as
201 an optional intermediate host (Fujita et al. 2020). Thus, *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus* are new hosts of *M.*
202 *parvostis* (NEW HOST RECORDS).

203 In Hiroshima Bay, the spawning of *A. schelgelii*, an optional intermediate host of *M. parvostis*, peaks
204 in early May (Kawai et al. 2017 2020 2021), and their juveniles settle on the surf zone from late June
205 (Kawai et al. 2019). *Mothocya parvostis* mancae initially infest *A. schelgelii* juveniles after *A.*
206 *schelgelii* metamorphoses and settles. Therefore, the prevalence of *M. parvostis* in *A. schelgelii*
207 increases rapidly from late June to early August (Fujita et al. 2020). Conversely, the spawning season
208 of *H. tsurugae* in Hiroshima Bay has not been clearly determined, but it has been estimated to start
209 from May to July in other regions in Japan (Mori et al. 1988). In the present study, *H. tsurugae*
210 juveniles were collected from July to October, a period consistent with the spawning season. The SL

211 of *H. tsurugae* juveniles just after metamorphosis is approximately 20 mm (Tsukamoto and Kimura
212 1993), which is close to the minimum size of *H. tsurugae* juveniles collected in this study. In addition,
213 their prevalence increased with each sampling day similar to that of *A. schelgelii*; the manca-
214 prevalence in 10–20 mm fish was the highest. These findings suggested that *H. tsurugae* juveniles
215 were collectively infested with *M. parvostis* mancae once metamorphosis was completed. The
216 juvenile-prevalence was higher than manca-prevalence in July, suggesting that *M. parvostis* mancae
217 began infesting *H. tsurugae* juveniles before July.

218 The spawning season of *A. latus* in Hiroshima Bay is poorly understood, but it likely occurs in
219 autumn (from September to November) in another region in Japan (Abol-Munafi and Umeda 1994;
220 Nishida 2022). In the present study, *A. latus* juveniles were collected from October 2021 to January
221 2022, a period concordant with the spawning season. The prevalence during the sampling period did
222 not significantly change, but the manca- and juvenile-prevalence changed. The manca-prevalence
223 was higher than juvenile-prevalence from late October to early December, but it decreased from late
224 December and became zero in early January. The SL of *A. latus* juveniles just after they
225 metamorphosed was approximately 10–15 mm, which was close to the minimum size of *A. latus*
226 juveniles collected in this study (Tran et al. 2019). In addition, the manca-prevalence in fish with a
227 size of 9–11 mm was the highest. These findings indicated that similar to *A. schlegelii* and *H. tsurugae*,
228 *A. latus* juveniles were collectively infested by *M. parvostis* mancae after metamorphosis.

229 The prevalence of *M. parvostis* in *A. schelgelii* juveniles decreases in August, and infested *A.*
230 *schelgelii* juveniles are rare in September (Fujita et al. 2020). Fujita et al. (2020) stated that *M.*
231 *parvostis* infestation in *A. schelgelii* juveniles is temporal, and *M. parvostis* break away from *A.*
232 *schelgelii* juveniles; therefore, *A. schelgelii* juveniles might be an optional intermediate host of *M.*
233 *parvostis*. In *H. tsurugae* juveniles, the juvenile-prevalence increased with each sampling day
234 although the manca-prevalence did not significantly change. In *A. latus* juveniles, the manca-
235 prevalence was higher than juvenile-prevalence from October to early December, but it decreased
236 from late December. Conversely, juvenile-prevalence increased. All *M. parvostis* individuals in *A.*
237 *latus* were juveniles in early January. In terms of prevalence by fish SL, all parasites in small fish
238 were mancae; in grown fish, they were gradually replaced by juveniles. In much larger fishes (*H.*
239 *tsurugae*: ≥ 50 mm, *A. latus*: ≥ 20 mm), all *M. parvostis* individuals were juveniles. As the fish further
240 grew, infestation was not observed. These suggest that *M. parvostis* manca infested small *H. tsurugae*
241 and *A. latus* juveniles. Once *M. parvostis* grew with fish juveniles, the parasites left their hosts. The
242 same pattern was observed in *A. schelgelii*. Therefore, *H. tsurugae* and *A. latus* were optional
243 intermediate hosts of *M. parvostis*.

244 As mentioned above, the prevalence of *M. parvostis* in *A. schelgelii* juveniles rapidly increases and
245 then decreases (Fujita et al. 2020). Similarly, the prevalence of *M. parvostis* in *H. tsurugae* juveniles

246 increased during the sampling period. The prevalence of *M. parvostis* by fish size in *A. latus* was
247 similar to that of *A. schelgelii* and *H. tsurugae*. However, the prevalence of *M. parvostis* in *A. latus*
248 juveniles did not change significantly during the sampling period. Although the cause is unknown,
249 this finding could be attributed to multiple factors, such as the density of mancae or the period when
250 juveniles settle. Hence, the spawning ecology of *A. latus* and the dynamics of free-swimming mancae
251 should be determined to explain why the prevalence of *M. parvostis* in *A. latus* juveniles did not
252 significantly change.

253 The reproductive cycles of Cymothoidae organisms vary; for example, *A. pomacentri* has no fixed
254 reproduction season and thus reproduces throughout the year (Adlard and Lester 1995); *M. epimerica*
255 has four reproduction seasons per year (Bello et al. 1997). However, the reproduction cycle of *M.*
256 *parvostis* is unknown, but mancae infest *A. schelgelii* juveniles from June to August (Fujita et al.
257 2020). *Mothocya parvostis* mancae can survive without a host for only 10–15 days (Hatai and
258 Yasumoto 1981). Therefore the reproductive season of *M. parvostis* included at least June to August
259 (Fujita et al. 2020). In this study, mancae infested *H. tsurugae* from July to October and *A. latus* from
260 October to December. Hence, *M. parvostis* could reproduce from June to December. Future
261 collections of free-swimming mancae, and eggs and mancae from the brood pouch of ovigerous
262 females throughout the year will help clarify the reproductive cycle of *M. parvostis*.

263

264 **CONCLUSIONS**

265 As the result of this study and Fujita et al. (2020), *A. schelgelii*, *H. tsurugae*, and *A. latus* juveniles
266 were infested with *M. parvostis* from June to August, July to October, and October to January the
267 following year, respectively. In other words, optional intermediate hosts were available to *M.*
268 *parvostis* for at least 8 months, and *M. parvostis* might infest different hosts appropriately depending
269 on the time of year. Fujita et al. (2020) hypothesised that after detaching from *A. schelgelii* juveniles,
270 *M. parvostis* juveniles can infest *H. sajori*. The results of present study support this hypothesis but the
271 hypothesis should be further studied in detail. However, if these juveniles can infest *H. sajori* after
272 they detach from optional intermediate hosts, using an optional intermediate host may be an excellent
273 strategy to increase the fitness of *M. parvostis*.

274

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280

281 **Authors' contributions**

282 HF designed and executed the experiments, collected samples, and wrote the manuscript. KK
283 analysed *A. lutas* and edited the manuscript. DD analysed *H. tsurugae* and edited the manuscript. TU
284 supervised and edited the manuscript. All authors have reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

285

286 **Competing interests**

287 HF, KK, DD, and TU declare that they have no conflict of interest.

288

289 **Consent for publication**

290 Not applicable.

291

292 **Ethics approval consent to participate**

293 Not applicable.

294

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421 Table 1. Genetic distances determined using the Kimura two-parameter model for the cytochrome *c*
 422 oxidase subunit I gene (COI) sequences of Cymothoidae

Comparison level	No. Taxa	Intraspecific			Interspecific		
		Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Genus							
<i>Anilocra</i>	2	0.000	0.349	0.202	10.959	11.187	11.028
<i>Ceratothoa</i>	4	0.169	2.593	1.221	18.398	31.589	29.224
<i>Nerocila</i>	2	0.000	1.280	0.444	27.307	28.836	27.721
<i>Mothocya</i>	4	0.000	1.020	0.261	3.126	13.902	11.752
<i>Mothocya</i> [#]	4	0.000	1.020	0.310	3.126	14.122	11.781

423 [#]Including haplotypes of *Mothocya parvostis* collected in the present study.

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447 Table 2. Genetic distances obtained using the Kimura two-parameter model for the 16S rRNA gene
 448 sequences of Cymothoidae

Comparison level	No. Taxa	Intraspecific			Interspecific		
		Min. (%)	Max. (%)	Mean (%)	Min. (%)	Max. (%)	Mean (%)
Genus							
<i>Anilocra</i>	2	1.328	1.875	1.622	18.940	19.715	19.327
<i>Ceratothoa</i>	3	0.000	1.229	0.643	14.043	24.881	22.661
<i>Nerocila</i>	2	0.000	1.050	0.638	20.564	20.564	20.564
<i>Mothocya</i>	3	0.000	0.836	0.219	1.003	9.994	9.356
<i>Mothocya</i> [#]	3	0.000	0.836	0.251	1.003	9.994	9.435

449 [#]Including haplotypes of *Mothocya parvostis* collected in the present study.

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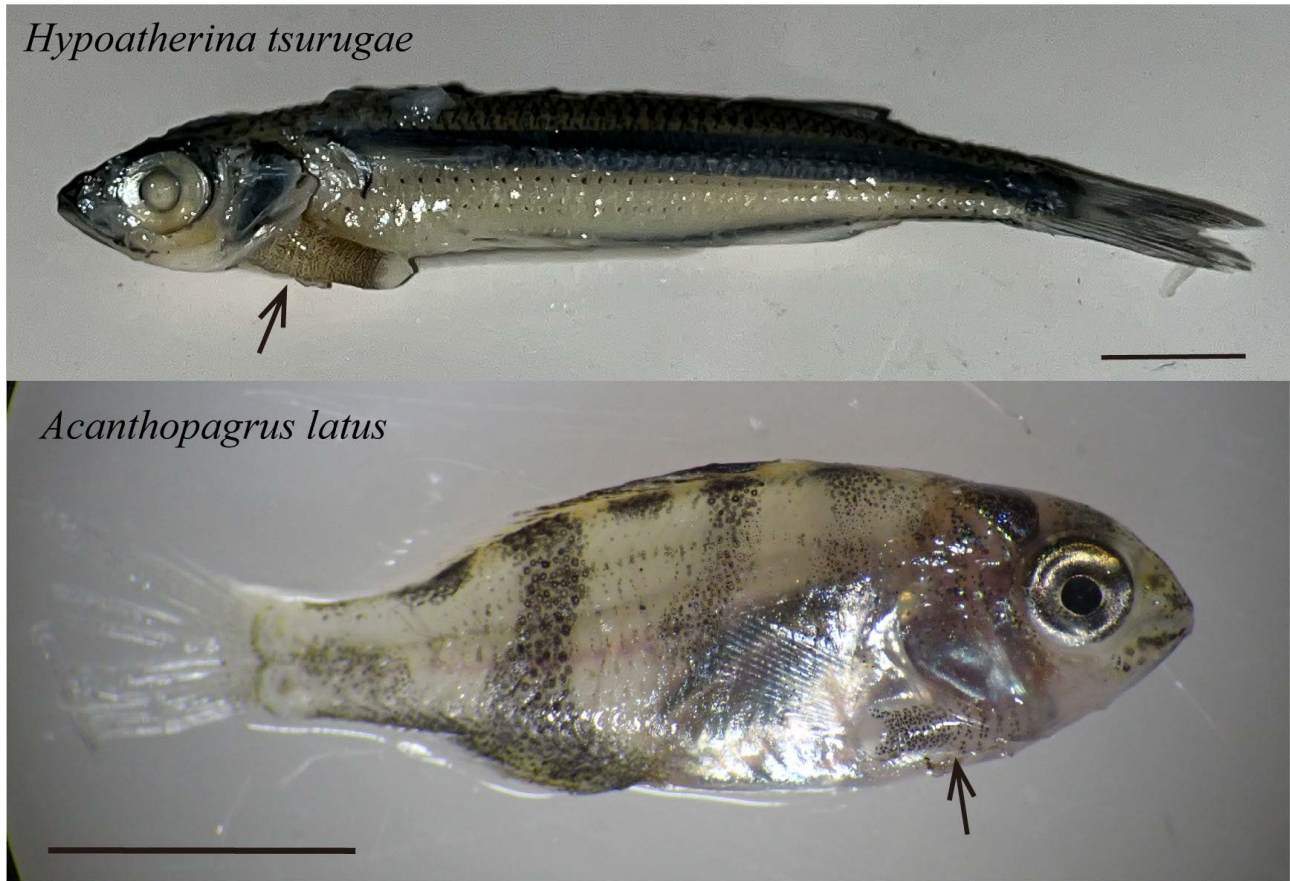
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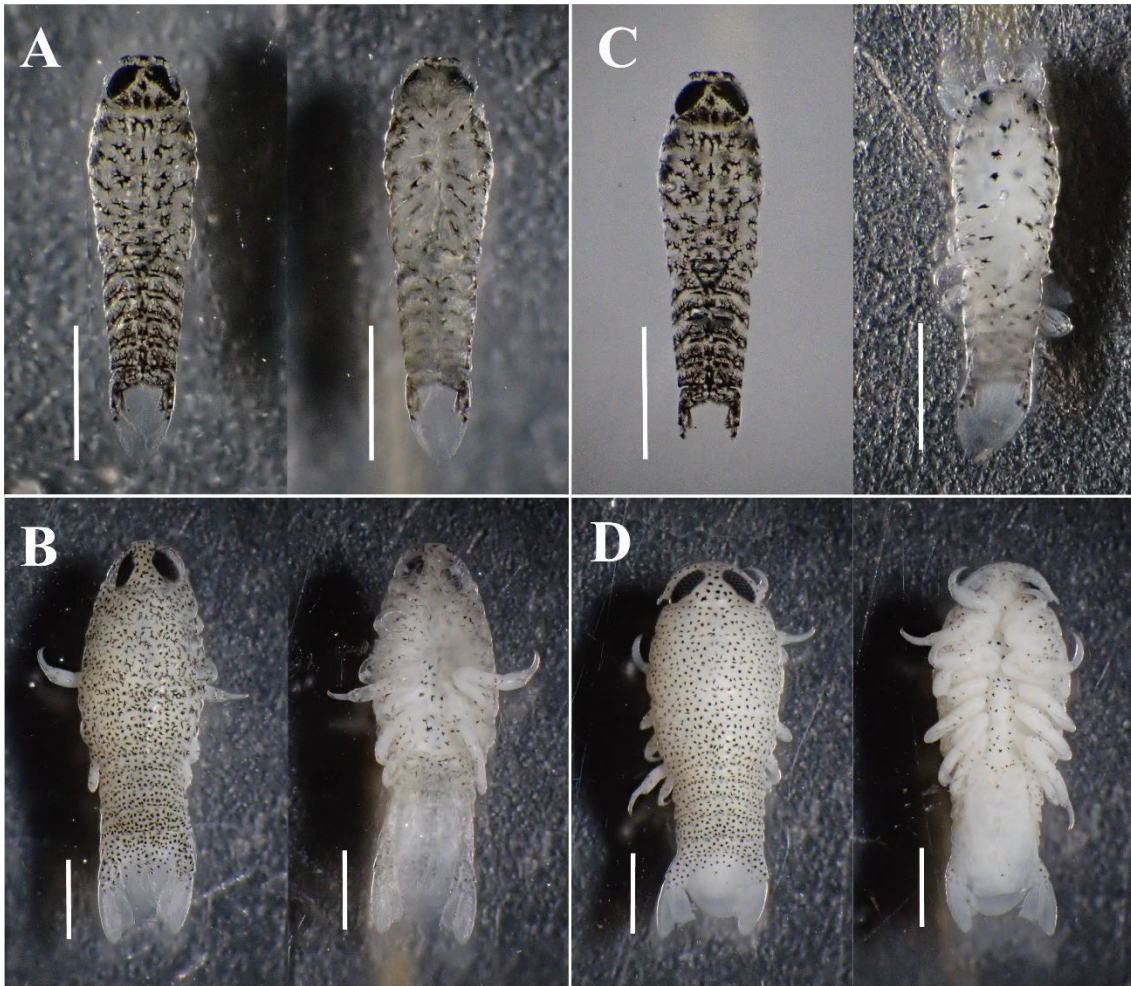
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458 Fig. 1. Juveniles of cobaltcap silverside *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and yellowfin seabream
459 *Acanthopagrus latus* infested with *Mothocya parvostis*. Arrows indicate *M. parvostis*. Scale bars = 5
460 mm.



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462 Fig. 2. Dorsal and ventral views of *Mothocya parvostis* infesting juveniles of cobaltcap silverside
463 *Hypoatherina tsurugae* (A and B) and yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus latus* (C and D). A and C:
464 mancae, B and D: *M. parvostis* juveniles. Scale bars = 1 mm.

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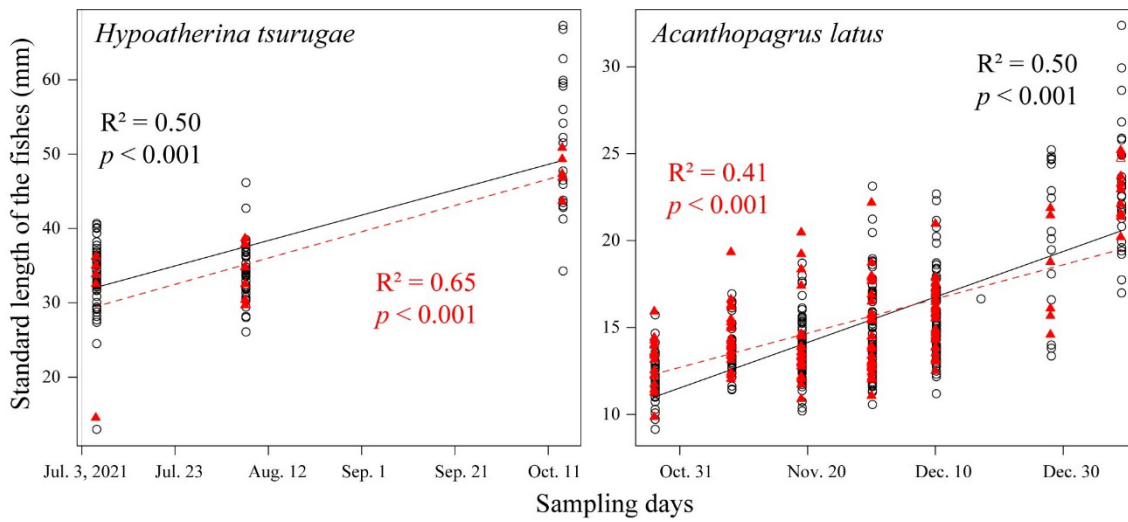
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480 Fig. 3. Scatter plots of the standard length of non-infested and infested fish for each sampling date in
 481 cobaltcap silverside *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus latus*. The open
 482 circles (black) indicate non-infested fish, and the closed triangles (red) correspond to infested fish.
 483 The solid lines (black) for non-infested fishes and the broken lines (red) for infested fishes are
 484 regression lines.

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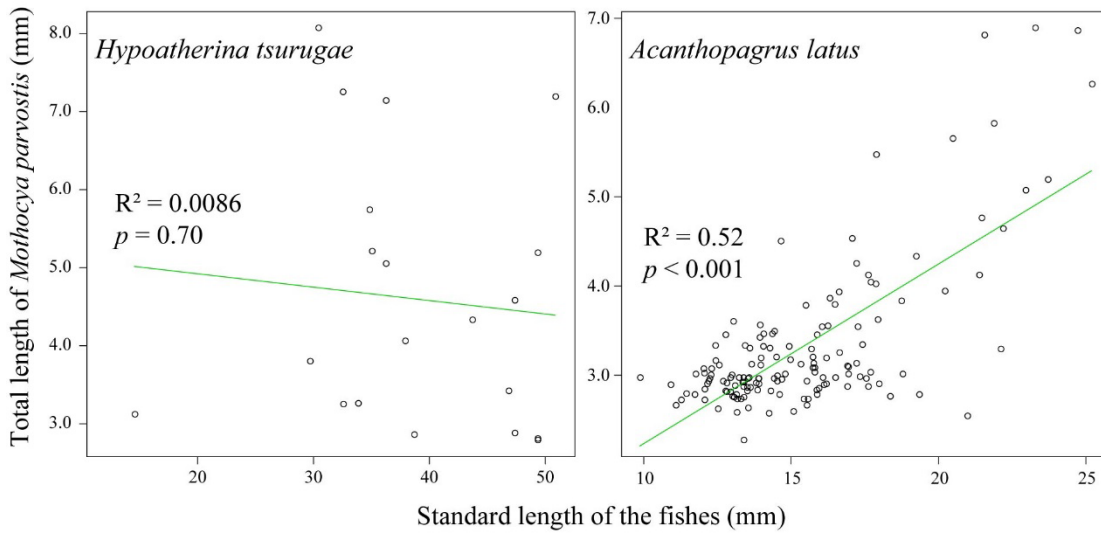
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497 Fig. 4. Scatter plots of the standard length of fishes and the total length of *M. parvostis* in cobaltcap
 498 silverside *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus latus*. The solid lines are
 499 regression lines.

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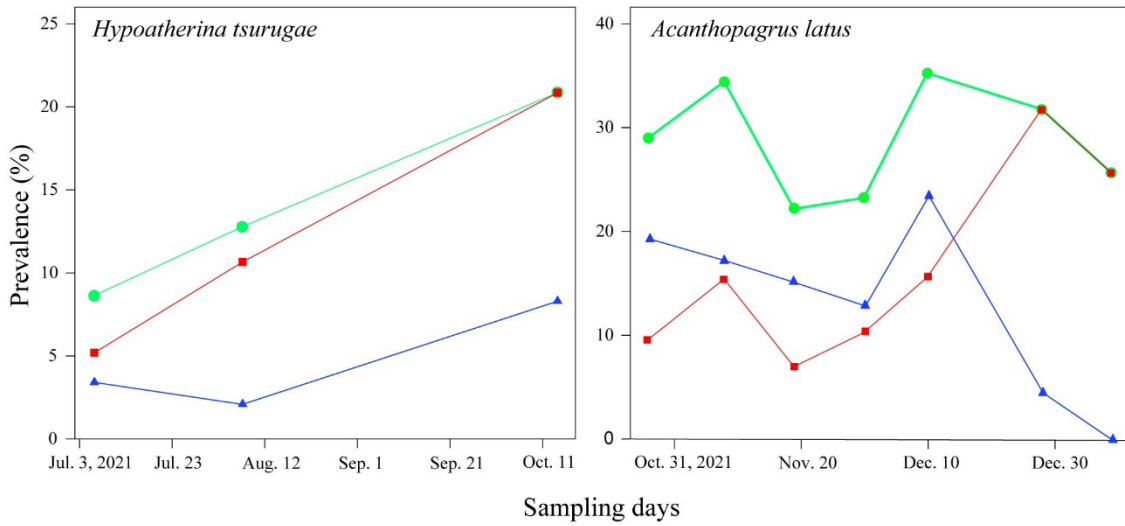
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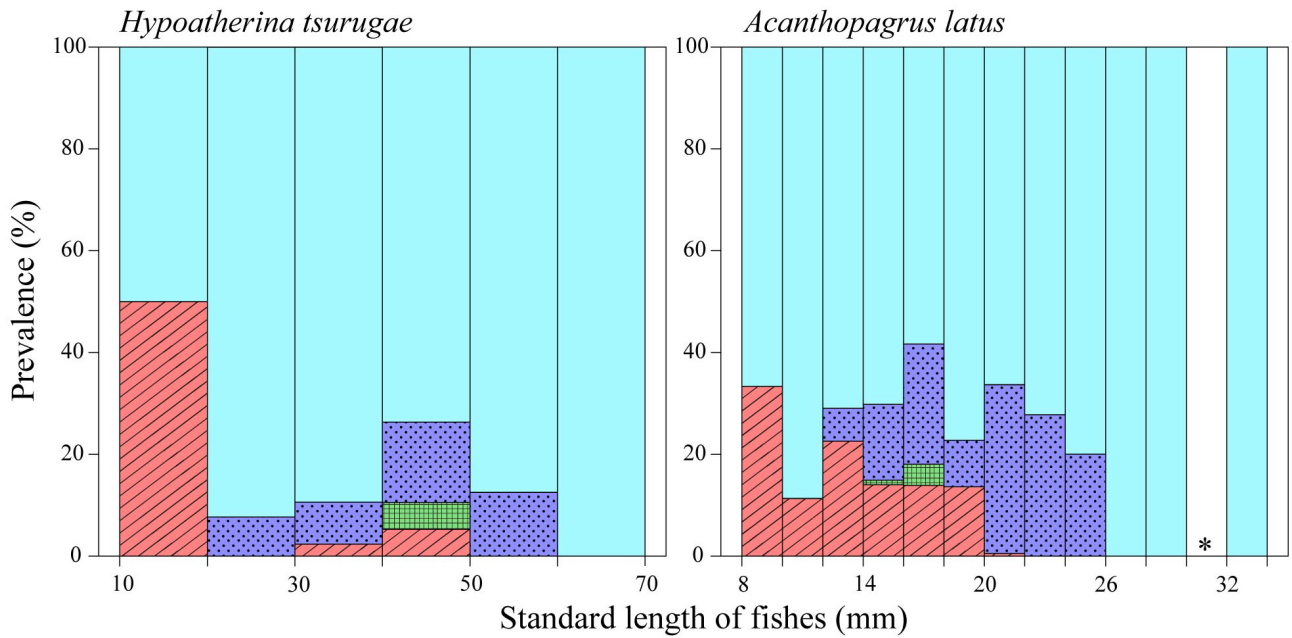
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 514 Fig. 5. Prevalence, manca-prevalence, and juvenile-prevalence for each sampling day in cobaltcap
 515 silverside *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus latus*. Closed circles
 516 (green), closed triangles (blue), and closed squares (red) indicate the prevalence, the manca-
 517 prevalence, and the juvenile-prevalence, respectively.

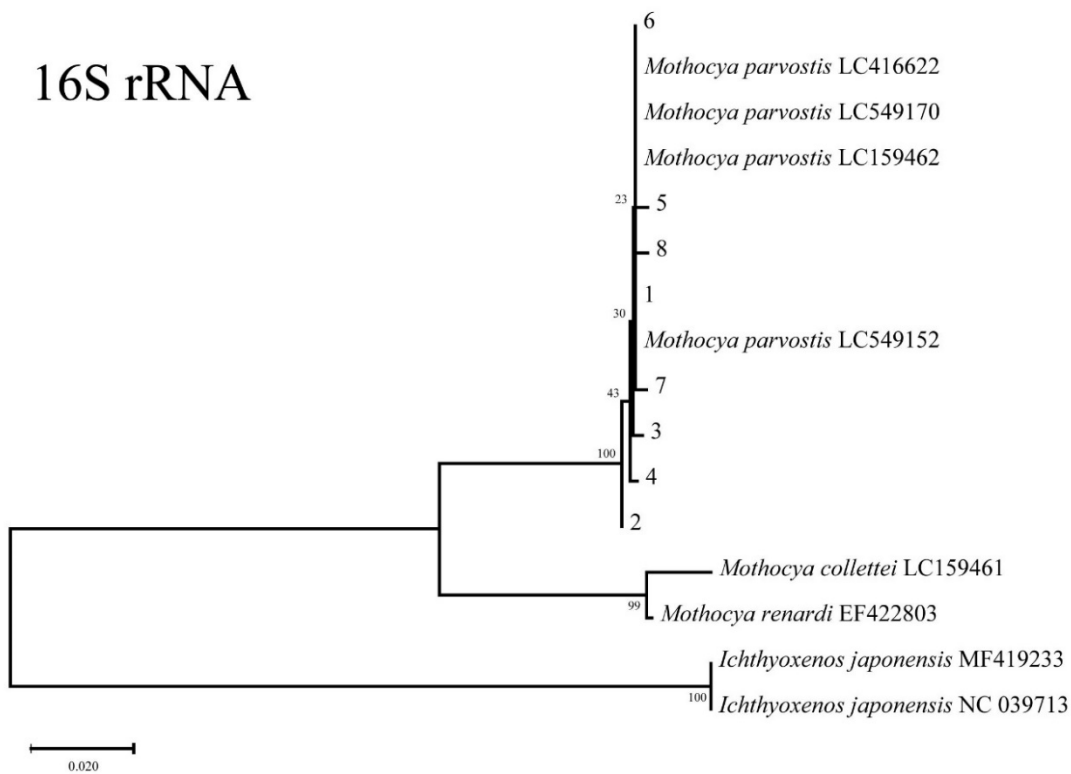
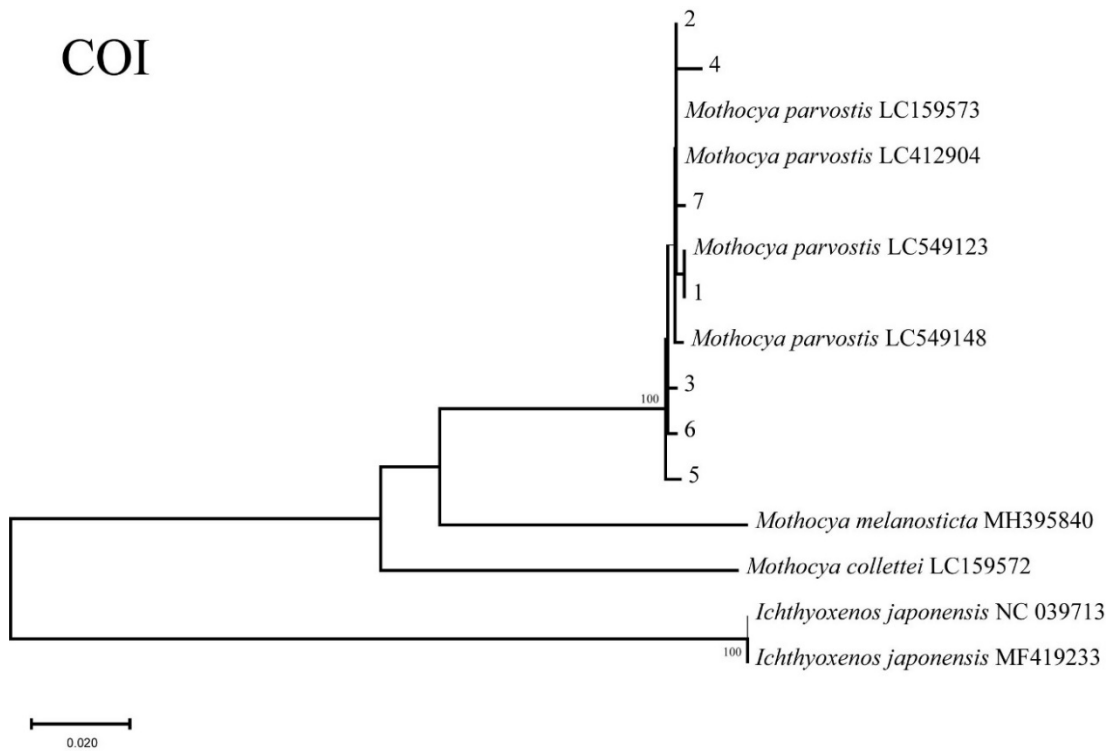
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530 Fig. 6. Prevalence of the standard-length range of fishes in cobaltcap silverside *Hypoatherina*
 531 *tsurugae* and yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus latus*. Diagonal shading bars (red), dot bars (blue),
 532 grid bars (green), and plain bars (light blue) indicate the manca-prevalence, juvenile-prevalence, the
 533 percentage of fish parasitised by both mancae and juveniles, and non-infested fishes, respectively.
 534 The asterisk indicates no data.

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537 Fig. 7. Neighbour-joining trees showing seven and eight haplotypes of the cytochrome c oxidase
 538 subunit I (COI) and 16S rRNA gene infesting cobaltcap silverside *Hypoatherina tsurugae* and
 539 yellowfin seabream *Acanthopagrus latus* along with selected sequences of other cymothoids
 540 downloaded from GenBank. Bootstrap values less than 98% are not shown. The accession numbers
 541 were deposited in GenBank.

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543 Supplementary Table S1. List of sequences from cymothoid species distributed in Japan downloaded
 544 from GenBank, with the corresponding accession numbers (Jones et al. 2008; Hata et al. 2017; Baillie
 545 et al. 2019; Fujita et al. 2020, 2021; Fujita in press; Saito and Fujita in press).

	COI	16S
<i>Mothocya parvostis</i>	LC159573, LC412904, LC549122, LC549123, LC549124, LC549125, LC549126, LC549127, LC549128, LC549129, LC549130, LC549131, LC549132, LC549133, LC549134, LC549135, LC549136, LC549137, LC549138, LC549139, LC549140, LC549141, LC549142, LC549143, LC549144, LC549145, LC549146, LC549147, LC549148, LC549149, LC549150, LC549151	LC159462, LC416622, LC549152, LC549153, LC549154, LC549155, LC549156, LC549157, LC549158, LC549159, LC549160, LC549161, LC549162, LC549163, LC549164, LC549165, LC549166, LC549167, LC549168, LC549169, LC549170, LC549171, LC549172, LC549173, LC549174, LC549175, LC549176, LC549177, LC549178
<i>Mothocya renardi</i>	MK652485, OL377828	EF422803
<i>Mothocya collettei</i>	LC159572	LC159461
<i>Mothocya melanosticta</i>	MH395840	-
<i>Anilocra clupei</i>	LC159540, LC160309, LC604073, LC708256	LC159426, LC604074, LC708257
<i>Anilocra prionuri</i>	LC159541	LC159427
<i>Ceratothoa arimae</i>	LC159544	LC159430
<i>Ceratothoa carinata</i>	MK652479	-
<i>Ceratothoa oxyrrhynchaena</i>	LC159545, LC159546, LC159547, LC159548, LC159549, LC159550, LC160310, LC160311, LC160312, LC626344	LC159431, LC159432, LC159433, LC159434, LC159435, LC159436, LC159437, LC160305, LC626345
<i>Ceratothoa verrucosa</i>	LC159556, LC159557, LC160317, LC160318	LC159444, LC159445
<i>Nerocila japonica</i>	LC159574, LC159575, LC160325, LC160326, LC160327, LC160328, LC160329, LC160330, LC160331, LC710516	LC159463, LC159464, LC710517
<i>Nerocila phaiopleura</i>	LC159576, LC160332, LC682406,	LC159465, LC682407

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