

OCCURRENCE OF MULTIPLE PHASMIDS IN *HOPLOLAIMUS INDICUS* SHER, 1963, WITH COMMENTS ON THE TAXONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF PHASMIDS IN HOPLOLAIMINAE (TYLENCHIDA: NEMATODA)

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Abstract

One of the important taxonomic characters used for distinguishing the genera *Hoplolaimus* Daday, 1905, *Scutellonema* Andrassy, 1958, *Aorolaimus* Sher, 1963, and *Peltamigratus* Sher, 1963, is the location of the normally two shield-like large sized phasmids – the scutellae which are absent in *Aphasmatylenchus* Sher, 1965. In Sher (1961, 1963, 1963 a & 1963 b) revision's of the Hoplolaiminae, their number was impliedly thought to be always two (just like that of the normal phasmids) but their location was different in different genera. In *Hoplolaimus* and *Aorolaimus*, one in the anterior and the other in posterior half of the body; *Scutellonema*, both scutellae opposite each other in anal region; and *Peltamigratus* with both the scutellae in the posterior half of the body but at different levels (not opposite each other). However, *H. californicus* Sher, 1963 is unique in the genus in having both the scutellae located in the posterior half of the body and *H. puertoricensis* Ramirez, 1964 having these in anterior half, indicating the intrageneric variability in this respect.