

IDENTIFICATION OF MANGE MITES OF DOG AND CATS (3): *CHEYLETIELLA*, *OTODECTES* and *TROMBICULA*

Cheyletiella spp. are surface feeding mites which cause a mild dermatitis in dogs, cats and rabbits; *Otodectes* mites live in the ears of dogs and cats, whereas the larvae of *Trombicula* infest the lower parts of dogs and cats and are mainly active in the autumnal months in the UK.

Walking dandruff' is a colloquial term sometimes used for the condition cheyletiellosis. Brushings from the coat appear to move especially when viewed against a dark background, as the mites are mobile and they often have quantities of skin scale and debris attached.

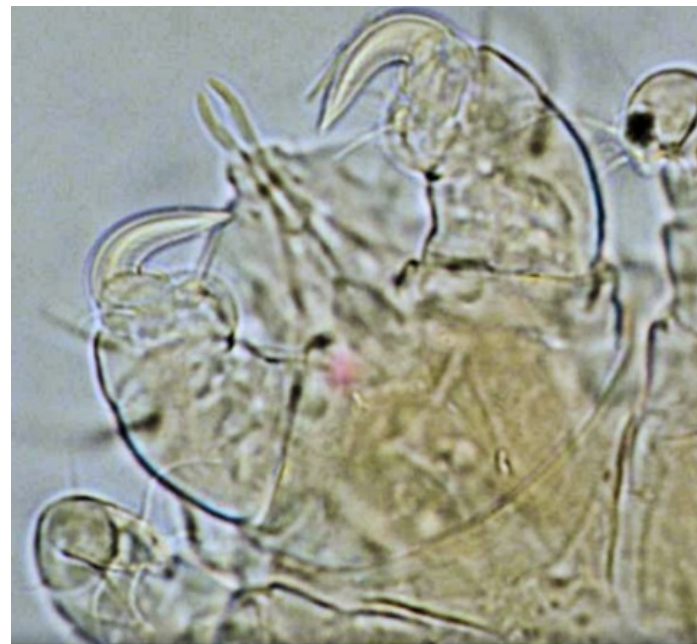


Otodectes cynotis may be associated with otitis externa of dogs and cats and although found deep in the ears, the mites may spread to the face in severe infestations. Female mites are approx. 400 µm; the first three pairs of legs protrude well beyond the body margin and long hairs originate from the third pair. The final pair of legs are very reduced. The head is pointed. Male mites have two suckers on adanal processes (arrows)

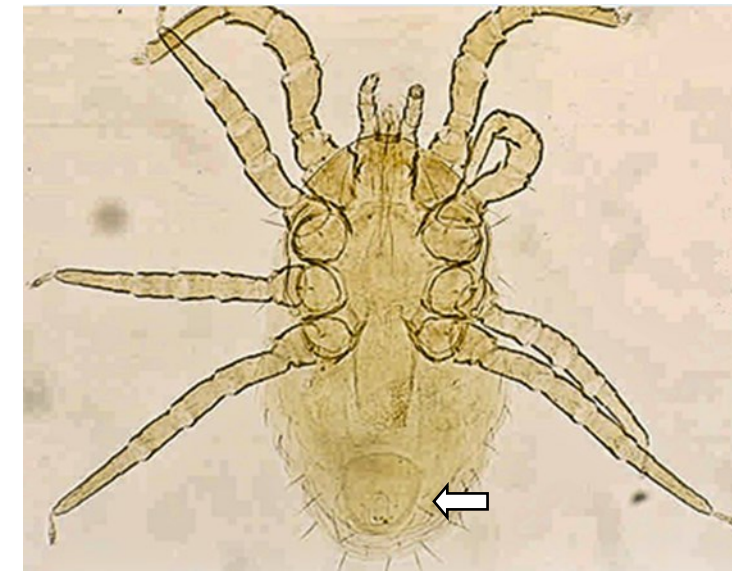


Cheyletiella spp have a characteristic shape with a suture in the 'waist' region (arrow). The species are *C. yasguri* (dogs), *C. blakei* (cats) and *C. parasitivorax* (rabbits). Eggs are laid in the fur or on the skin and the entire life cycle takes place on the animal. Analysis of faecal samples from infested animals may reveal eggs of *Cheyletiella* as a result of self grooming

On closer examination, the presence of the frontal claws are diagnostic for the genus *Cheyletiella*. These claws are recurved and very prominent originating from the pedipalps. It is sometimes said that the anterior end looks like the horns of a buffalo.



Trombicula autumnalis (left) are tiny (300µm) blood feeding mites which can cause a severe local pruritic dermatitis in dogs and cats, mainly during late autumn. It is the larval stage - orange in colour - which is parasitic. Since these mites clump together to feed, they are usually noticed as small orange patches on the animal's skin, often on the underparts. Under the microscope, the larvae have the characteristic colour and six legs which are rather long and spider-like. The palps are prominent and pointed.



Dermanyssus gallinae (above), the poultry red mite occasionally bites dogs and cats (and people) and can cause dermatitis but feeding is opportunistic and is not a true mange mite. It is a large blood sucking mite which becomes red when fed. This mite is identified by the long legs and the presence of the D-shaped anal plate (arrow)