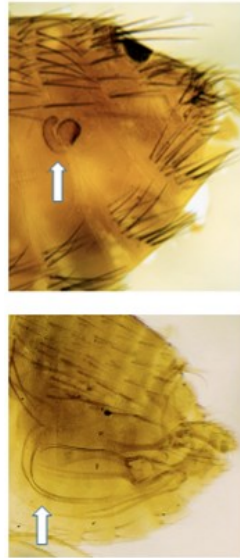


AN IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO FLEAS ON PETS IN THE UK

FLEAS ARE WINGLESS BLOOD SUCKING INSECTS, USUALLY FOUND IN THE NESTS, OR ON THE BODIES OF A WIDE RANGE OF MAMMALS AND BIRDS. SOME 62 SPECIES OCCUR IN BRITAIN. THE CAT FLEA *CTENOCEPHALIDES FELIS* IS A SEVERE NUISANCE ON BOTH CATS AND DOGS, BUT OTHER SPECIES, EXAMPLES OF WHICH ARE SHOWN HERE, MAY ALSO BITE DOMESTIC PETS.

CTENOCEPHALIDES SPP: THE GENAL COMB HAS 8-9 SPINES;
THE PRONOTAL COMB HAS 14-18 SPINES IN TOTAL

Female fleas have a comma-shaped reproductive organ known as the spermatheca, consisting of a wide main part, the bulga, and a narrower tube, the hillia

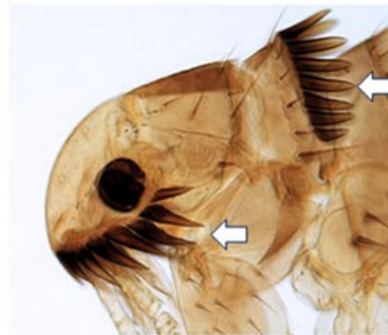


Male fleas have complex genitalia with claspers and an aedeagus (penis) coiled like a spring



COMBS (CTENIDIA) CONSIST OF ROWS OF CHITINOUS SPINES

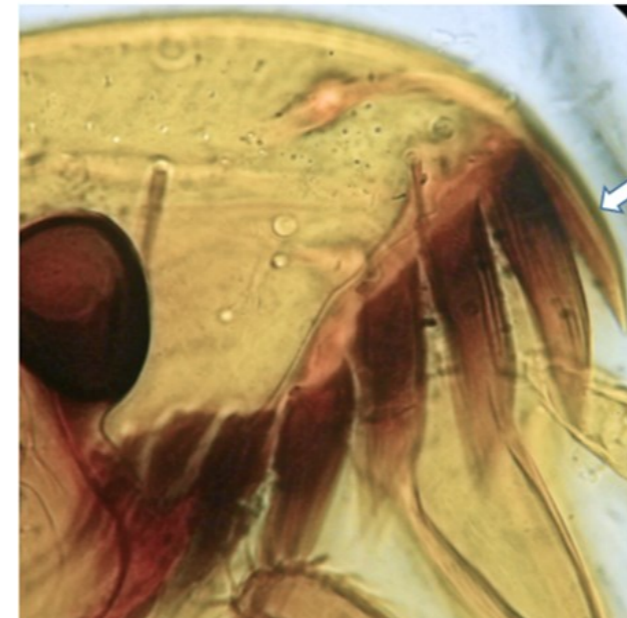
PRONOTAL COMB: These tooth-like chitinous spines are arranged along the margin of the prothoracic segment. For flea identification, the shape and number of these spines is important and both sides are counted.



GENAL COMB: These spines are arranged along the posterior margin of the head. The spines on one side are counted.

***CTENOCEPHALIDES FELIS*— CAT FLEA.**

The head slopes gently and is more elongated than that of the dog flea. First spine of the genal comb (arrow) is only a little shorter than the second. The main hosts are domestic cats in Europe, but also found on dogs. A very cosmopolitan flea, which often bites man and is responsible for household infestations.



***CTENOCEPHALIDES CANIS*— DOG FLEA.**

The head strongly rounded anteriorly in both sexes. The first spine of the genal comb about half as long as the second. The principal hosts are foxes and domestic dogs.



***SPILOPSYLLUS CUNICULI* RABBIT FLEA.**

The genal comb has 4-6 short blunt spines; the pronotal 12-17 spines.



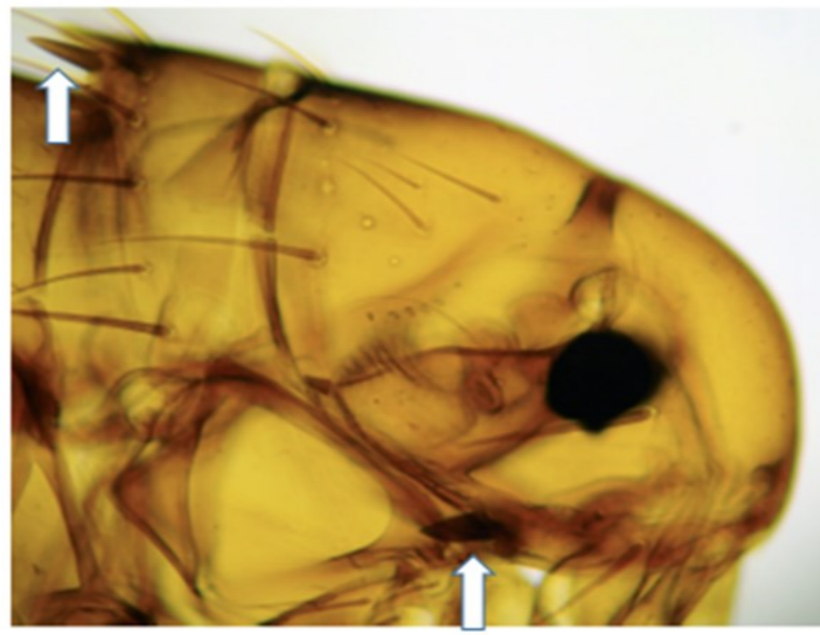
***CERATOPHYLLUS GALLINAE* BIRD FLEA.**

The genal comb is absent; the pronotal comb of at least 24 spines.



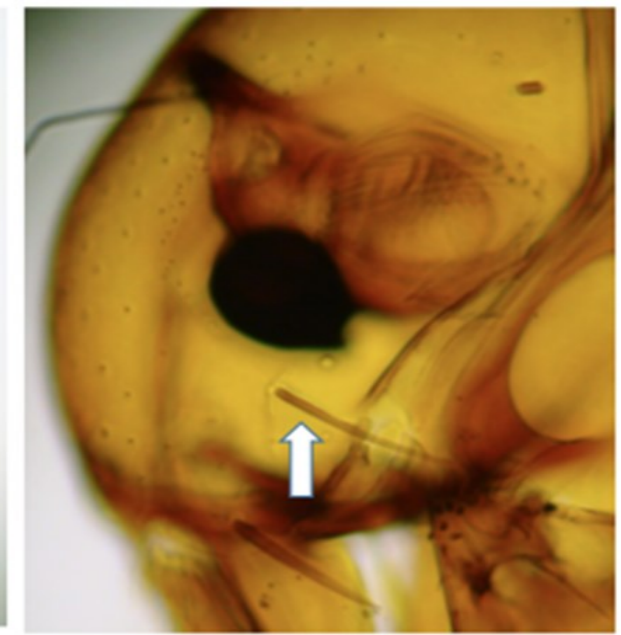
***ARCHAEOPSYLLA ERINACEI* ERINACEI-
HEDGEHOG FLEA.**

Genal comb consists of 1-3 short spines; pronotal comb



***PULEX IRRITANS* - HUMAN FLEA**

Combs absent. There is a conspicuous bristle below the eye and a reduced bristle on genal margin. Associated with humans, pigs and various animals.



For the identification of Fleas in the UK, see Fleas (Siphonaptera) by Amoret P. Whitaker handbook for the identification of British Insects Vol 1 Part 16. (2007)