

IDENTIFICATION OF *RICKETTSIA* SP. AND *BARTONELLA* SP. IN FLEAS FROM THE THAI-MYANMAR BORDER

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A total of 89 fleas were collected in the central part of the Thai-Myanmar border (Sangkhlaburi District of Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand) between September 2001 and March 2002. These included 12 *Xenopsylla cheopis* and 23 *Nosopsyllus fasciatus* collected on rodents, 20 *Ctenocephalides felis* collected on cats and 1 on a civet, and 34 *Ctenocephalides canis* collected on dogs. All fleas were tested by PCR to detect DNA of bacteria of the genera *Rickettsia* (*gltA* and *OmpB* genes) and *Bartonella* (*ITS* and *ftsZ* genes). Sequencing of PCR amplified products resulted in the identification of 2 genotypes close to *Rickettsia felis* in 3 *C. canis* and 1 *C. felis* specimens. Further, the following *Bartonella* spp. were detected: (i) *Bartonella hensaleae* in 2 *C. felis* specimens, (ii) *Bartonella clarridgeiae* in 3 *C. felis* specimens, (iii) a new *Bartonella* genotype in 1 *N. fasciatus* specimen collected on *Rattus surifer*. These results provide for the first time evidence of *Rickettsia* and *Bartonella* potentially pathogenic to humans in fleas from the western border of Thailand.

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