HELMINTH DYNAMICS IN URBAN WASTEWATER FROM THE BORIBANA COLLECTOR (ATTÉCOUBÉ, ABIDJAN)

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ABSTRACT

A parasitological study was conducted on wastewater passing through the "Boribana" collector, located in the commune of Attécoubé (District of Abidjan, Côted'Ivoire), to assess its helminth egg load. Samples were collected from November 2015 to May 2016 at four sites distributed along the collector. The analysis identified fourteen (14) helminth taxa belonging to three classes: Nematodes (7 taxa), Trematodes (4 taxa) and Cestodes (3 taxa). Nematodes were found to be the most diverse. The most frequently detected species were Ascaris lumbricoides, Trichuris trichiura and Taenia sp., with Ascaris lumbricoides also being the most abundant species. The average helminth egg concentration ranged from 9.53 eggs/L (station D) to 146.15 eggs/L (site A). A peak in parasite load was observed during the local rainy season, suggesting a significant seasonal influence on parasitic contamination of wastewater.

Keywords: helminth eggs, Abidjan, parasitological characterization, wastewater.

Introduction:

Rapid urbanization and population growth in developing countries are accompanied by a significant increase in the production of domestic and industrial wastewater (Konaté,1996). In the absence of adequate sanitation infrastructure, this effluent is frequently discharged into the environment without prior treatment, directly affecting receiving environments such as rivers, lakes, lagoons, and coastal areas. This poor management poses a major threat to water resources, aquatic biodiversity, and public health.

The use of contaminated water for drinking or domestic purposes is a recognized vector for the transmission of waterborne diseases, particularly in densely populated areas where sanitation infrastructure is inadequate (Morel, 1996). Furthermore, stagnant or slow-flowing water promotes the proliferation of vectors of diseases such as malaria and schistosomiasis. The World Health Organization (WHO, 1987) emphasizes that the uncontrolled growth of urban areas, fueled by a massive rural exodus, has led to the emergence of informal

- 33 settlements lacking basic services, exacerbating environmental contamination and parasite
- 34 prevalence.
- 35 Pathologies linked to poor wastewater management include intestinal parasitic infections,
- 36 mainly due to helminths, which particularly affect school-aged children (Pierson, 1998). The
- 37 persistence of these infections reflects a degraded environmental context, marked by poor
- 38 fecal hygiene, inadequate sanitation facilities, and inaccessibility to quality drinking water
- 39 (Nozais, 1998).
- 40 The situation is particularly worrying in the district of Abidjan, where the commune of
- 41 Attécoubé illustrates the critical failings of the urban sanitation system. The "Boribana"
- 42 collector, the main outlet of this municipality, discharges a large volume of wastewater into
- 43 the Ébrié lagoon without treatment, compromising the ecological balance of the environment
- 44 and exposing human and animal populations to serious health risks.
- 45 Despite the health implications of these discharges, data on the parasitological quality of
- 46 wastewater in the Abidjan district remain scarce. This work aims to fill this knowledge gap,
- 47 following studies conducted on the "Gouro" collector (Cissé et al., 2011). The objective of
- 48 this research is to assess the parasite load of wastewater from the "Boribana" collector
- 49 through a qualitative and quantitative analysis conducted at four stations representative of
- 50 contrasting socioeconomic and hygienic environments. In parallel, the study examines the
- 51 seasonal variation in helminth egg abundance according to rainy and dry periods, in order to
- seasonal variation in homeon egg atomicalize decorating to tamy and dry periods, in order to
- 52 better understand the dynamics of parasitic contamination in tropical urban environments.
- 53 54

- 55 Materials and Method:
 - Presentation of the study area:
- 57 The city of Abidjan is located in the southeast of Côte d'Ivoire, between latitudes 4°10' and
- 58 5°30' North and longitudes 3°50' and 4°10' West. It constitutes the country's main economic,
- 59 administrative, and demographic center. The Ébrié Lagoon, a vast body of water, borders the
- 60 city to the south and covers approximately 16% of its total area, estimated at 60,000 hectares
- 61 (Dongo, 2001). This geographical configuration favors the direct transfer of urban wastewater
- 62 to aquatic environments. Consequently, the risks of pollution and health impacts are
- 63 significant.
- 64 The commune of Attécoubé, located in west of Abidjan, forms the setting for this study. It
- 65 covers 68.2 km². Approximately 40 km² are covered by the Banco National Park and 5 km² by
- 66 the Ébrié Lagoon. Thus, the actual habitable area is reduced to 23.2 km² (Champentier et al.,

- 67 2000). This territory is characterized by a high population density, often haphazard
- 68 urbanization, and insufficient sanitation service coverage.
- 69 The "Boribana" collector represents the municipality's main wastewater drainage axis. 10.5
- 70 km long, it connects the "Cité Fairmont" and "Sébroko" neighborhoods. It is located on the
- 71 left bank of the Ébrié Lagoon. This collector drains a variety of water sources. It receives
- 72 domestic effluent (latrines, public toilets), artisanal wastewater (garages, livestock markets),
- and rainwater. Its wide varies from 1 to 10 meters depending on the sections crossed.

Description of the sampling sites:

- 76 Four sites were selected along the collector. Their selection was based on criteria of
- 77 accessibility, hydrological representativeness, and diversity of surrounding uses. The first site,
- designated site A (05°21'26.1"N; 04°01'51.3"W), is located at the entrance to Attécoubé,
- 79 near the KLENZI gas station. It receives wastewater from the Gbébouto and Saint-Joseph
- neighborhoods. The second, site B (05°20'28.4"N; 04°01'56.9"W), is located approximately
- 81 five kilometers downstream. It collects effluent from site A and from the Adjamé-Bromakoté
- 82 livestock market. Site C (05°20'36.1"N; 04°02'06.9"W), located three kilometers further,
- drains water from the Ebrié and Adjamé Santé neighborhoods. Finally, site D (05°20'38.1"N;
- 84 04°02'15.7"W) is two kilometers from the previous site, less than 500 meters from the
- 85 lagoon. It receives water from the "Boribana" neighborhood and water accumulated upstream.
- ingoon reference water from the Bottoman neighborhood and water accumulated approximate
- 86 These four sites cover a wide variety of urban contexts. They thus allow for a rigorous spatial
- 87 and temporal analysis of parasitic contamination in the collector. The locations of the sites are
- shown in Figure 2.

89 90

Domestic Wastewater Sampling

- 91 Two sampling campaigns were conducted at each site of the "Boribana" collector between
- 92 November 2015 and May 2016. Samples were taken in high-flow areas, where water
- 93 circulation is most intense (Bontoux, 1983). Sampling took place between 6:00 am. and 9:00
- 94 am., a period corresponding to peak domestic wastewater discharges related to household
- 95 activities (Lahlou 1992; Nsom-Zamo et al., 2003).
- 96 The volume of each sample was 2.5 liters. This volume, validated as optimal for parasite
- 97 analyses along with the 5-liter volumes, ensures reliable and representative results
- 98 (Schwartzbrod& Strauss 1989). Each sample was stabilized by adding 2 ml of formalin
- 99 (10%), then labeled and transported to the laboratory for parasitological analyses.

101 concentration of the parasite load. 102 103 Parasitological Analyses 104 **Analytical Method** Parasitological analysis relies on enrichment techniques, necessary due to the low density of 105 106 parasitic elements, which makes direct examination unreliable (Thévenotet al., 1985). Among the available methods, Bailenger's was chosen. Recommended by the WHO (1997), it is rapid, 107 simple, reproducible, and economical. Additionally, the reagents used are consistent, non-108 109 toxic, and inexpensive. This method is based on parasite concentration by separating debris, under the effect of 110 111 differential forces exerted by immiscible phases (acetoacetic acid and ether) on hydrophilic and lipophilic particles. It allows efficient recovery of eggs from several helminth species 112 113 (Bouhoum&Schwartzbrod 1989). 114 115 Helminth Egg Concentration 116 The method used is Bailenger's, modified according to WHO recommendations (1997). It relies on passive decantation of the sample, performed in the laboratory overnight. The 117 resulting sediment is transferred to tubes and then centrifuged at 1000 rpm for 15 minutes. 118 The pellet is then mixed with an equivalent volume of acetoacetic acid buffer at pH 4.5, 119 120 prepared with 15 g of sodium acetate, 3.5 ml of acetic acid, and 1 liter of distilled water. A volume of ether, twice that of the buffer, is added. The mixture is vigorously vortexed and 121 122 then centrifuged again at 1000 rpm for 6 minutes. This step produces four distinct layers (Figure 3). The top three layers are removed, including 123 the layer of debris attached to the walls. The final pellet is resuspended in a 33% ZnSO₄ 124 solution, with a specific gravity of 1.18, with a volume five times that of the pellet. 125 This concentration allows helminth eggs to rise to the surface under the coverslip, facilitating 126 127 their detection and counting under a microscope. 128 129 Observation, Identification, and Counting of Helminth Eggs 130 Observation is performed using a MacMaster slide and a binocular microscope. A magnification of ×100 is used for egg identification, while ×400 is used for morphological 131 identification. This is based on specific criteria: size, shape, contour, color, thickness, and 132

The two monthly series of samples made it possible to calculate the monthly average

content (Bouhoum 1987). Measurements are taken with a micrometer. Identification is based 133 134 on the keys of Bailenger (1982) and WHO (1997). Counting is performed using a MacMaster slide (capacity: 0.3 ml). The total number of eggs 135 per liter of wastewater (N) is calculated using the following formula: 136 137 138 Where N: Number of eggs per liter of wastewater; 139 A: Number of eggs counted on the MacMaster slide; X: Volume of the final product (ml); 140 141 P: Capacity of the MacMaster slide (0.3 ml); V: Volume of the initial wastewater sample to be analyzed (2.5 liters). 142 143 **Expression of Results** 144 145 Species richness corresponds to the total number of species recorded in a given environment. It is a key indicator of the ecological quality of a plant (Aliaume et al., 1990). Occurrence (F) 146 is used to assess the constancy of a species. It expresses the percentage presence of a species 147 148 in all the samples analyzed. It is calculated using the following formula: 149 Based on the value of F, Dajoz (2000) adopts the following classification: 150 constant species: present in more than 50% of samples; 151 152 incidental species: present in 25 to 50% of samples; 153 accidental species: present in less than 25% of samples. 154 155 Statistical Analysis The Kruskal-Wallis rank-order test was used to compare abiotic parameter values between 156 157 stations and between different sampling months. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare variations in environmental parameters from one month to the next and from one 158 station to another (StatSoft France 2005). STATISTICA 7.1 software was used for the various 159 160 tests, maintaining the probability threshold at 0.05. 161 162 Results and Discussion 163 Results Qualitative Analysis

165 Taxonomic Composition

- Analysis of wastewater from the "Boribana" collector identified 14 helminth taxa. These taxa
- are divided into three main classes: Nematodes, Trematodes, and Cestodes. Nematodes are the
- 168 most represented with seven taxa, including Ascaris lumbricoides and Trichuris trichiura
- 169 (Table I). Trematodes comprise four taxa, while Cestodes comprise three taxa. The
- 170 characteristic eggs of each group are illustrated in Figure 4.

172 Occurre

171

- 173 The majority of taxa were detected in all four stations. However, some, such as
- 174 Trichostrongylus sp., were absent from site D. Analysis of the 48 samples revealed an
- 175 occurrence ranging from 6.25% for Dicrocoeliumlanceatum to 100% for Ascaris
- 176 lumbricoides. Consistent taxa (present in more than 50% of samples) include Taenia sp.
- 177 (85.41%) and Capillaria sp. (68.75%). Enterobius vermicularis was considered incidental
- 178 (50%). The other species, present in less than 25% of samples, were classified as incidental
- 179 (Figure 5).

180 181

Spatial and Monthly Dynamics of Taxon Richness

- 182 Spatially, site D displays the lowest richness (RT = 1), while station A records the highest (RT
- 183 = 12). Taxa range from 2 to 12 at site A, from 3 to 10 at B, from 2 to 11 at C, and from 1 to 9
- at D. However, the Kruskal-Wallis test (p = 0.68) reveals no significant difference between
- 185 site (Figure 6). Temporally, taxon richness remains low overall, with limited fluctuations. At
- site A, it ranges from 3 taxa in March to 13 in January. Similar patterns are observed at the
- other sites (Figure 7),

188 189

190 Quantitative Analysis

- 191 The quantitative analysis focused on spatial and monthly variations in helminth egg
- 192 concentrations. Figures 8, 9, and 10 illustrate the overall variation by site, the distribution by
- 193 class, and the distribution by taxon, respectively.
- 194 Marked variability was observed between sites. At site A, concentrations ranged from 45 to
- 195 192.5 eggs per liter. At site B, they ranged from 42.5 to 117.5 eggs per liter. Site C had values
- between 15 and 115 eggs per liter. At site D, concentrations fluctuated from 7.5 to 100 eggs
- 197 per liter.

- 198 The highest concentrations were recorded at site A. They gradually decreased toward site D.
- 199 This variation was statistically significant according to the Kruskal-Wallis test, with a p-value
- 200 of 0.007. Comparaisons using the Mann-Whitney test indicate significant differences between
- sites A and D, A and C, and B and D, with p-values less than 0.05.
- 202 All three helminth classes are present at all sites. Nematodes dominate, followed by
- 203 trematodes, as shown in Figure 9. Ascaris lumbricoides is the predominant taxon at all sites,
- as shown in Figure 10.
- 205 Monthly variation in egg concentration is generally moderate, as shown in Figure 11. At site
- 206 A, values range from 45.16 eggs per liter in April to 146.15 in March. At site B, they vary
- 207 between 45.55 in February and 108.35 in April. At site C, concentrations fluctuate between
- 208 37.22 and 79.20. Finally, at site D, they range from 9.53 eggs per liter in December to 82.13
- 209 in May.

Discussion

- 212 Parasitological analyses of wastewater from the "Boribana" collector reveal high taxonomic
- 213 diversity, with fourteen taxa identified, as well as significant quantitative heterogeneity. This
- species richness exceeds that observed by Sylla &Belghyti (2008) in the raw wastewater of
- 215 Sidi Yahia du Gharb in Morocco, which contained ten. However, parasite composition appears
- 216 to depend on local conditions, such as the presence of livestock markets, slaughterhouses, or
- the level of infestation of the population served.
- 218 The results obtained are comparable to those reported in several European countries and the
- United States by Stien &Schwartzbrod (1988). They confirm significant fecal pollution
- 220 carried by the effluent. Qualitative analysis highlights three groups of helminths: Nematodes,
- 221 Cestodes, and Trematodes. Nematodes are largely dominant. According to Schwartzbrod $et\ al.$,
- 222 (1983), Guessabet al., (1993), and Alouniet al., (1995), intestinal nematode eggs exhibit
- 223 greater resistance in wastewater compared to cestode and trematode eggs. Their prevalence
- may also be explained by their direct transmission cycle, as indicated by M'rabet (1991),
- Bouhoumet al.,(1997), and Schwartzbrod& Capizzi (2003). These findings are corroborated
- by work conducted in Morocco (Belghyti et al., 1994; Nsom-Zamo et al., 2003) and
- elsewhere in the world (Stien &Schwartzbrod 1987).
- 228 Embryoned nematode eggs are transmitted directly from an infested host to a healthy
- 229 individual, without intermediate maturation. This mode of transmission favors massive and
- 230 rapid production. Conversely, cestodes and trematodes require an intermediate host, making
- their life cycle longer and more complex.

232 The diversity and number of eggs also vary among groups. Identified nematodes include 233 Ascaris lumbricoides, Capillaria sp., Enterobius vermicularis, Necator americanus, 234 Strongyloides sp., Trichuris trichiura, and Trichostrongylus sp. Recorded trematodes include 235 Dicrocoeliumlanceatum, Fasciola hepatica, Schistosoma japonicum, and Schistosoma 236 mansoni. Cestodes are represented by Diphyllobotrium latum, Hymenolepisdiminuta, and 237 Taenia sp. Ascaris lumbricoides eggs are the most common. This dominance could be explained by their high resistance and protective shell, which ensures their survival in hostile 238 239 conditions, as highlighted by the WHO (1987). Helminth egg concentrations varied among the sampled stations. Site A had the highest load, while Site D recorded the lowest values. 240 241 Bouhoum (1996) demonstrated that parasite density is strongly influenced by demographics. The high number of residents connected to site A would explain its high concentration. In 242 contrast, at site D, the slow flow velocity would promote egg settling and reduce the parasite 243 load. 244 Monthly analysis shows that peak concentrations are reached in March, April, and May. This 245 trend is consistent with the observations of Bouhoumet al., (2002), Dssouli (2002), El 246 247 Gamri&Belghyti (2007), and Cissé et al., (2011). These authors also observed an increase in 248 parasite load during the rainy season. WHO (1987) attributes this increase to climatic conditions favorable to egg maturation, including temperature, humidity, oxygen, and 249 sunshine. Population behavior, such as the opening of septic tanks during the rainy season, 250 251 also aggravates this situation due to a lack of health and environmental education.

Conclusion

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254 The characterization of helminth eggs in the wastewater from the "Boribana" collector allowed us to assess the quality of the raw discharge before treatment. This study revealed a 255 high parasite load, with fourteen taxa divided into three classes: Nematodes, Cestodes, and 256 257 Trematodes. Nematodes, represented by seven taxa including Ascaris lumbricoides and 258 Necator americanus, are the most diverse. Trematodes comprise four taxa and Cestodes three. 259 Ascaris lumbricoides largely dominates the samples, particularly during the rainy season, a 260 period conducive to parasite spread. The concentrations observed far exceed the thresholds recommended by the WHO for irrigation, highlighting a significant health risk in the event of 261 reuse without treatment. To prevent these ecological and health risks, particularly the 262 contamination of the Ébrié lagoon, the installation of a wastewater treatment plant is essential. 263

264265

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: List of taxa encountered in urban wastewater from the "Boribana" collector at the different sites (+: Presence; -: Absence).

		Sampling sites			
Classes	Taxa	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
Cestodes	Diphylobotrium latum	+	+	+	+
	Hymenolepisdiminuta	+	+	+	+
	Taenia sp.	+	+	+	+
Nematodes	Ascaris lumbricoïdes	+	+	+	+
	Capillariasp.	+	+	+	+
	Enterobius vermicularis	+	+	+	+
	Necator americanus	+	+	+	+
	Strongyloïdessp.	+	+ 4	+	+
	Trichostrongylus sp.	+	+ ^	+	-
	Trichuris trichiura	+	+	+	+
Trematodes	Dicrocoeliumlanceatum	+ ,	C +	+	-
	Fasciola hepatica	+	4	+	+
	Schistosoma japonicum	+	+	+	-
	Schistosoma mansoni	+	+	+	+
Total	14 taxa	14	14	14	11

LIST OF FIGURES

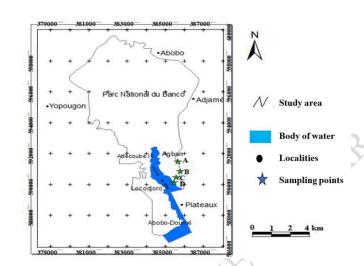
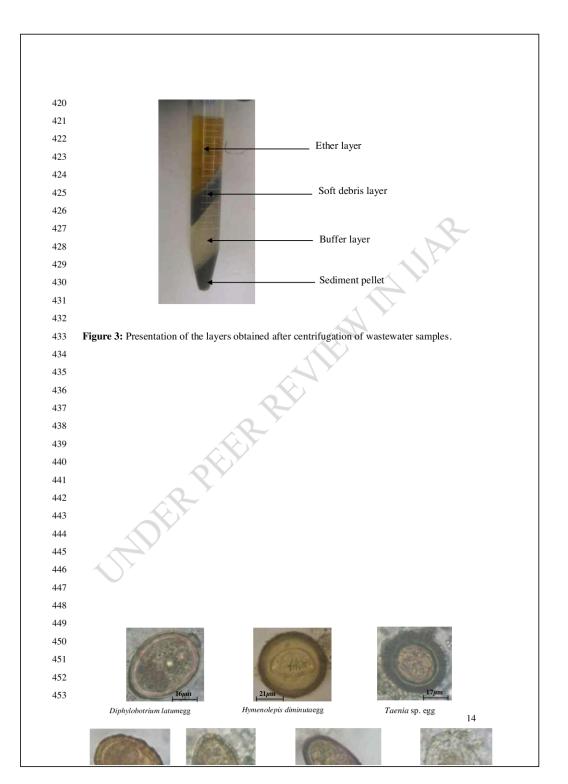
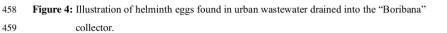


Figure 1: Geographical location of the different sampling points



Figure 2: Partial view of the sampling sites (A = Site A; B = Site B; C = Site C; D = Site D).





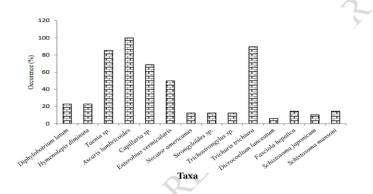


Figure 5: Percentage of occurrence of helminth taxa found in urban wastewater from the "Boribana" collector.

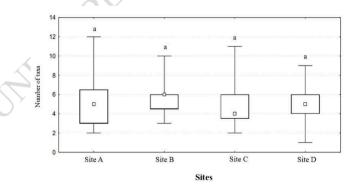


Figure 6: Spatial variation in the taxonomic richness of helminth eggs in urban wastewater from the "Boribana" collector.

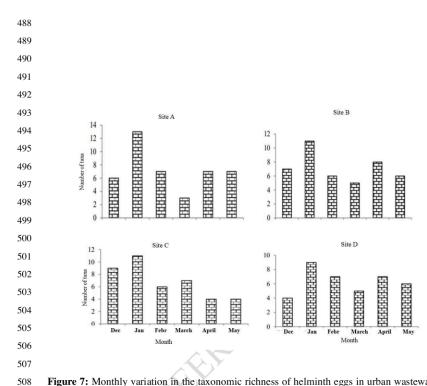
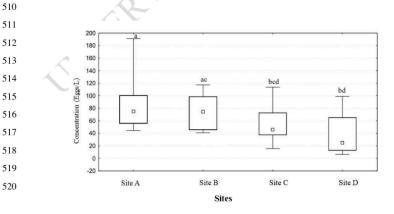


Figure 7: Monthly variation in the taxonomic richness of helminth eggs in urban wastewater from the "Boribana" collector.





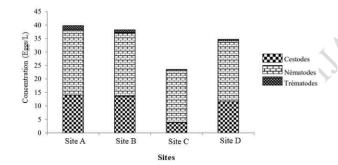


Figure 9: Egg concentration of helminth classes collected at the different sampling sites.

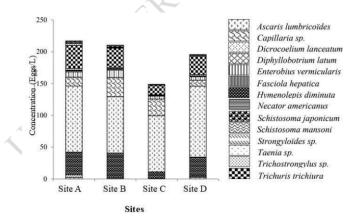


Figure 10: Egg concentration of helminth taxa in urban wastewater from the different stations surveyed.

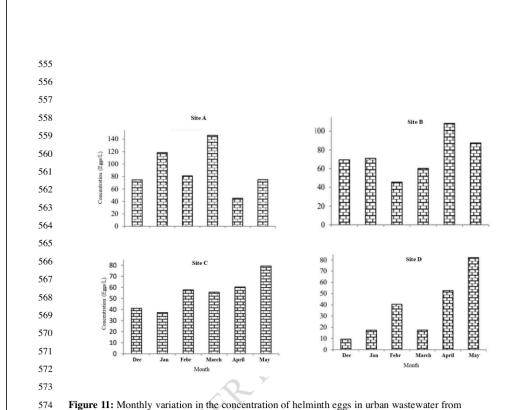


Figure 11: Monthly variation in the concentration of helminth eggs in urban wastewater from the "Boribana" collector.

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