

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW FLEA (*STEPHANOCIRCUS
DASYURI*) FROM NEW SOUTH WALES; WITH NOTES
OF SOME OTHER INSECT PARASITES KNOWN IN
AUSTRALIA.

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[Plate XVII.]

The specimens from which the appended description has been derived were obtained in numbers by my colleague, Mr. Edgar R. Waite, and myself whilst searching for *Ixodes* on the body of the Australian Tiger Cat, *Dasyurus maculatus*, Kerr.

It must not be entertained that the writer is impetuous to describe isolated species, or is an advocate of the only too prevalent practice. The reason for now so doing is certainly in part excusable, owing to the distinctive character of the insect under notice, but it is more especially done with the view of soliciting *authentic* specimens of the cutaneous Insect, Arachnid and Arachnoid parasites infesting our native Vertebrates, the majority of which will doubtless prove to be plagued with their own peculiar forms.

Very few records appear to have been made of the external parasites of Australian animals, and few of these with reference to their respective hosts. With the view of collecting specimens, it might be pointed out to those in the bush districts having the opportunity, that they may be sought with success upon any animal. Even the fleas themselves have other "fleas" to bite them. Mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fishes, all have parasites infesting their skin—in most cases species peculiar to themselves; in many, several distinct forms, each of which usually occupies some particular portion of the surface of the body. These pests are by no means confined to insect representatives; indeed the majority belong to the Arachnida. Various species of flies deposit their eggs in the skins of both warm- and cold-blooded Vertebrates, some permanently residing under the hair or feathers in their perfect condition, and gorging themselves with the blood of their victims. Many varieties of fleas (*Aphaniptera*) have been recorded, most of which, under ordinary circumstances, are peculiar to some particular beast or bird. Bugs and lice, of which numerous undescribed forms doubtless exist on our native animals, may be readily collected. Of Arachnids, it is scarcely necessary to direct attention to the ticks, a species of which, *Ixodes hydrosauri*, Denny, occurs upon one of our large lizards. There are also many kinds of minute eight-legged mites, which feed upon various animals,