

# **Differential precocious sexual development of *Proctoeces lintoni* (Digenea: Fellodistomidae) in three sympatric species of keyhole limpets *Fissurella* spp. may affect transmission to the final host**

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## **Abstract**

The prevalence, abundance, and developmental status of the digenetic trematode *Proctoeces lintoni* Siddiqui et Cable 1960 were compared in 3 species of keyhole limpets *Fissurella*. A total of 197 limpets was collected at Caleta Chome, south-central Chile. *Fissurella picta* and *F. costata* had the highest prevalence of infection, whereas *F. picta* showed the greatest abundance of parasites, which increased with host shell length. However, the frequency of *P. lintoni* specimens with eggs in the uterus was greatest in *F. costata*. These results suggest that an increased rate of development of a parasite in the intermediate host may shorten the residence time necessary for maturation in the final host. Thus, faster development of the parasite in *F. costata* suggests the possibility that the parasites transmitted through this host species have shorter maturation times in clingfishes than individuals transmitted via other limpet species.