



**P 70 Cryptic or scarce: Distribution of the tick parasitoid *Ixodiphagus hookeri***

Claas-Thido Pfaff, Jana Collatz, Ute Mackenstedt, Philipp Selzer, Rainer Oehme, Johannes L.M. Steidle

Universität Hohenheim, Institut für Zoologie, FG Tierökologie 220c, Garbenstr. 30, 70593 Stuttgart, Germany (e-mail: selzer@uni-hohenheim.de)

The chalcid wasp *Ixodiphagus hookeri* is a parasitoid of ticks, which makes it a potential candidate for the biological control of ticks. However, much more information on the natural behaviour and distribution of the wasps is needed.

In this study, the parasitization rate with *I. hookeri* of *Ixodes ricinus* on different sites in Germany was investigated by rearing the wasps from collected ticks or by detecting the wasps' DNA with the help of real-time PCR. *I. hookeri* was found on all the investigated sites.

To study abiotic factors from natural habitats of *I. hookeri*, Ellenberg Indicator Values of plants occurring at wasp sites were determined. This allowed a first description of the ecological niche of the wasps.

Earlier studies showed that the wasps use odours of large mammals like wild boar or deer to find suitable tick hosts. This led to the hypothesis that the parasitization rate with *I. hookeri* of ticks at sites positively correlate with mammal density. However, preliminary data are contradictory to this hypothesis.