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"TAXONOMICAL AND ECOLOGICAL STUDIES ON FRESHWATER FLEAS(CRUSTACEA) IN QENA GOVERNORATE"

A THESIS

Submitted for The Award of The Ph.D. Degree

By

Amal Ahmed Mahmoud

(M. Sc)

Under The Supervision of

Prof. Dr. M. A. Hussein

Department of Zoology Faculty of Science Assiut University

Dr. A. H. Obuid- Allah

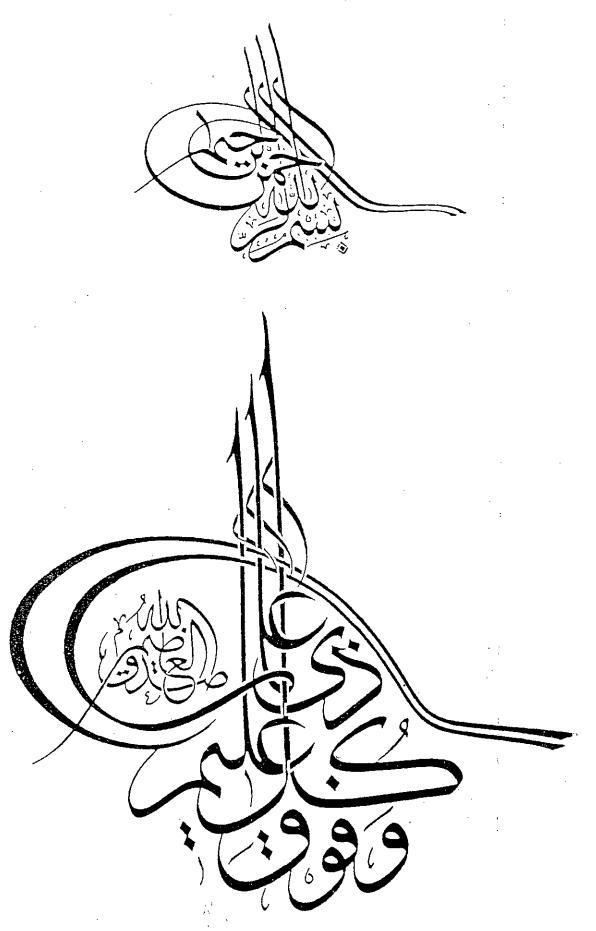
Department of Zoology Faculty of Science Assiut University

Dr. A. S. M. Moustafa

Department of Zoology Faculty of Scince, Qena South Valley University

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(سـورة يوسف ، آية ٧٦ ك)

To

My Parents

My Husband; Yahia

My Sons; Tamer, Basim and Mahmoud

My Daughter; Dalia

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LIST OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Introduction	1
2. Materials and Methods	7
3. Results and Discussion	12
3.1. Description of the collecting sites	12
3.1.1. Description of Qena sites	12
3.1.1.1. Site (1)	12
3.1.1.2. Site (2)	13
3.1.1.3. Site (3)	15
3.1.1.4. Site (4)	16
3.1.2. Naga-Hammadi site (5)	17
3.1.3. Esna site (6)	18
3.2. Diagnostic characters of Cladocera and its class-	
ification	20
3.2.1. Diagnostic characters of Cladocera	20
3.2.2. Classification of Cladocera	22
3.2.3. Presentation of the recorded species	23
3.3. Morphological and ecological studies	25
3.3.1. Diaphanosoma mongolianum Uneo, 1938	26
3.3.1.1. Description of Parthenogenetic female	26
3.3.1.2. Discussion	32
3.3.1.3. Ecology of Diaphanosoma mongolianum Uneo, 1938	34
3.3.2. Bosmina longirostris (O.F. Müller, 1785)	36
3.3.2.1. Description of parthenogenetic female	36
3.3.2.2. Discussion	40
3.3.2.3. Ecology of Bosmina longirostris (O.F. Müller,	
1785)	42
3.3.3. Alona bukobensis Weltner, 1896	44
3.3.3.1. Description of parthenogenetic female	44
3.3.3.2. Discussion	47
3.3.3. Ecology of Alona bukobensis Weltner, 1896	49

3.3.4. Chydorus sphaericus (O.F. Müller, 1785)
3.3.4.1. Description of Parthenogenetic female
3.3.4.2. Discussion
3.3.4.3. Ecology of Chydorus sphaericus (O.F. Müller,
1785)
3.3.5. Ceriodaphnia reticulata (Jurine, 1820)
3.3.5.1. Description of parthenogenetic female
3.3.5.2. Discussion
3.3.5.3. Ecology of Ceriodaphnia reticulata (Jurine,
1820)
3.3.6. Daphnia longispina (O.F. Müller, 1785)
3.3.6.1. Description of parthenogenetic female
3.3.6.2. Discussion
3.3.6.3. Ecology of Daphnia longispina (O.F. Müller,
1785)
3.3.7. Simocephalus exspinosus (Koch, 1841)
3.3.7.1. Description of parthenogenetic female
3.3.7.2. Discussion
3.3.7.3. Ecology of Simocephalus exspinosus (Koch, 1841)
3.3.8. Simocephalus vetulus (O.F. Müller, 1776)
3.3.8.1. Description of parthenogenetic female
3.3.8.2. Discussion
3.3.8.3. Ecology of Simocephalus vetulus (O.F. Müller,
1776)
3.3.9. Macrothrix laticornis (Jurine, 1820)
3.3.9.1. Description of Parthenogenetic female
3.3.9.2. Discussion
3.3.9.3. Ecology of Macrothrix laticornis (Jurine, 1820)
3.3.10. Moina micrura (Kurz, 1874)
3.3.10.1. Description of parthenogenetic female
3.3.10.2. Discussion
3.3.10.3. Ecology of Moina micrura (Kurz, 1874)
3.4. Comments on morphology
3.5. Ecological observations

	Page
3.5.1. Abundance and seasonal distribution	115
3.5.2. Effect of ecological factors	118
3.6. Summary	122
3.6. Summary	
3.7. References	128
Appendix	
3.8. List of tables	143
3.8. List of tables	146
3.9. Tables	
3.10. List of figures	188
3.11. List of abbreviations	194
3.11. Hist of abbreviations 3.12. Figures	197
3.12. Figures	267
3.13. List of Photos	
3.14. Photos	272
3 15 Summary in arabic	_
1 15 SHMMAIV III ALADIC	1

I. INTRODUCTION

Among the freshwater zooplankton community, Cladocera represents one of the most common elements of pelagic populations. Being almost exclusively filter feeders and algae users and, at the same time, the favourite prey of invertebrate and vertebrate predators, Cladocera represents the most important group in the plankton community of lakes, as regards energy transfer along the food chain (Bernardi et al., 1987).

According to Frey (1982), serious taxonomic work on Cladocera began with O.F. Müller in 1776, and the next century was devoted almost exclusively to the fauna of Europe. Beginning essentially with E.A. Birge in 1878. Scientists studied Cladocera from other regions, and, seeing taxa that resembled those already described from Europe, gave them the same names. The idea quickly became accepted that many species of Cladocera are essentially cosmopolitan in distribution, but few attempts were made to ascertain if widely separated taxa bearing the same name are indeed the same. Recent studies of some examples of Cladocera have demonstrated that each of these wide-ranging taxa consists of a group or complex of species, no one of which by itself is cosmopolitan. It seems certain that many of the other "species", at least of chydorids, with claimed cosmopolitan distribution will likewise be found to consist of clusters of closely related species. Serious questioning of the concept of cosmopolitanism began with a paper by Frey (1973) that established a new species of Eurycerus and defined three subgenera. Also, Frey (1987) indicated that from the studies he had published and from examination of hundreds of samples from different parts of the world, many taxa presently having the same names are really different. They look alike on a gross basis, but at the level of significant details they are different. They often are members of a species group of sibling species that as a group is widely distributed around the world, but the individual species of which are much more restricted. Frey also added that the present confusion in the taxonomy of Cladocera has arisen from accepting cosmopolitanism.

From the abovementioned concept of non cosmopolitanism of Cladocera, one can conclude the importance of local and national taxonomic studies on the Cladocera to fulfill the gap and to enlarge our knowledge about the confused taxonomy of these animals.

Accordingly, many taxonomic studies including revisions on some cladoceran genera of the world were carried out. It is worthy to mention in this regard the work of Frey (1975) who published work on the chydorid Cladocera and described a new species from northern Sweden. Hebert (1977) revised the taxonomy of genus Daphnia in South-eastern Australia. Paggi (1978) revised the Argentine species of genus Diaphanosoma Fischer. Korovchinsky (1981) worked on the taxonomic and