

Abstract

Cockroaches are tremendously interesting group of insects with broad morphological diversity and a wide range of lifestyles. They are known to host a plethora of fascinating protists ranging from excavate flagellates through gregarines and amoebozoans to extraordinary ciliates of the group Armophorea. There is however, in contrast to the flagellates, only scarce information on these intestinal ciliates. The available data are mostly only morphological and there is a limited information on their host specificity. Therefore, we chose to inspect the diversity of ciliates in cockroaches, both in the stock cultures of Department of Zoology on Charles University as well as in those collected in nature. We studied their presence in various cockroach lineages, obtained 18S rRNA gene sequence data, and assessed their phylogenetic relationships. We also performed protargol staining of the cells to characterize the morphology of individual lineages.