

A LETHAL SPOROZOAN PARASITE CAUSING SKIN PUSTULES

According to Dr. J. Cl. Beetschen of the Universite Paul Sabatier, his colleagues, Profs. Houillon and Gallien, observed infections in their axolotl and Pleurodeles colonies due to a sporozoon of the genus Dermocystidium. This parasite is present in liver and blood cells before forming skin pustules. Apparently certain animals show parasitic infection but are resistant to further damage; but if pustules form the disease, left untreated, is always lethal. The only efficient cure is to warm the animal slowly - over 48 hours - from 18° to 25° to kill the parasite.

Resistant animals may transmit the disease to their young. The disease is still present among Pleurodeles in Paris but has not been seen in axolotls there since 1968.

-LML