INTRODUCTION

Parasitism is the form of association between two organisms in which the parasite lives inside or on other associate host; parasitology is an ever growing discipline or rather in dynamic state. There is ever increasing need to explore newer methods and attitudinal changes to tackle emerging diseases and their consequent losses to the farming community. There is an urgent need to evolve consensus in this matter by the expert in the field of parasitology and allied disciplines. Parasitism is a nature way of life among the large number of organism and parasitic diseases are the major public health problem, which results into morbidity and mortality in tropical countries, particularly in the Socio-economically underdeveloped societies of the world.

Taxonomy of cestodes has been realm during nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Parasitologists have their preference of studying helminth parasites group wise, such as trematodes, cestodes and nematodes. But recent studies are somewhat different and particularly for an ecologist to give community, diversity of parasites to a particular host, its infra population has to be studied. Such studies will give a comprehensive idea about the infra population of a particular host as well as its host parasite relationship.

The parasites live in an abnormal environment of its host through morphological and physiological modification includes movement is restricted compare to free organism, motile structure are their poor or reduced. In many parasites, the alimentary canal (Digestive system) is lost or reduced because they do not need an elaborate gut to digest food materials. Most of helminths are endoparasites, they live in the environment which does not allow visibility hence they lack vision organs such as eyes for detection of light. The adaptation also occurs in adhesive organs e.g. Suckers, hooks, tentacles, spines and allies for the attachment purpose. The reproductive system and capacity of parasites are also modified to suit their needs.

The edible vertebrates are important components of the ecosystem. They are very important from the ecological and economical point of view. Some edible vertebrates like fishes: includes fresh water fishes labeo, catla, mrigal, catfish and eels. birds: like
domestic fowls, ducks, rock pigeons, doves and mammals: includes goats, sheep’s, buffaloes, cows, bullocks, pigs are the animals which are important sources of food for human beings as well as economically important to farmers. The edible vertebrates produce important products like meat, eggs and beautiful feathers. If the cestode parasites found in host intestine are responsible for indigestion, dysentery, ulcer, abdominal pains. On the other hand heavy infection to the host decreases the rate of reproduction, nervous disorders and at last death of host i.e. increases the rate of mortality. When improperly cooked flesh of these infected vertebrates eaten by human beings, causing number of harmful diseases/disorders.

Morphologically the cestode parasites are elongated dorsoventrally flattened, divided into number of proglottids, multicellular, bilaterally symmetrical endoparasites. They have no digestive system because they live in intestine of host; they absorb digestive food material from the surrounding area. Reproductive system is highly developed in each mature segment.

World-wide, about 3000 million cases of helminthiasis exits at present either as single or mixed infections. However, since helminth infections are usually asymptomatic and not dramatic in morbidity, they are not always regarded as serious diseases.

Edible vertebrates have heavy infection of varied types of cestode parasites. Consumption of edible vertebrates by human beings as a nutritious food, by not cooking properly causes dangerous diseases.

The environmental factors including climate, season, and rainfall play an important role in the development of gastro-intestinal helminth parasites. As every species of parasites passes its own particular problem, it is essential to be quite sure of identify the species while dealing with. Therefore an accurate classification is fundamental for the completion on this study.

The infection of cestode parasites is found in plenty of edible vertebrates including fishes, birds, and mammals. So far very little work has been done on cestode parasites of edible vertebrates in India.
Taking into consideration the economic importance of food value of these edible vertebrates, the author is undertaking the work on studies of systematic and morphology of cestode parasites in edible vertebrates from Pune and Satara districts of Maharashtra state and tries to cover maximum Tahshil places of Pune and Satara Districts.