

OCCURRENCE OF TALAROMYCES MARNEFFEI IN WILD MAMMALS IN PORTUGAL

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OBJECTIVES: *Talaromyces marneffi* is a thermally dimorphic fungus that is endemic in some parts of Asia causing a fatal systemic mycosis in immunocompromised patients [1]. The aim of this study was to evaluate the occurrence of *T. marneffi* in the fur of wild mammals in Portugal.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: A convenience sample of fur of 101 wild animals, 51 Red foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*), 5 Beech martens (*Martes foina*), 6 Eurasian otters (*Lutra lutra*), 3 European badger (*Meles meles*), 3 Common genet (*Genetta genetta*), 19 Egyptian mongooses (*Herpestes ichneumon*), 2 Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), 7 Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), 4 Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and 1 Brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), were examined. The samples were inoculated in Potato Dextrose Agar medium and Sabouraud Dextrose Agar medium and incubated at 25°C and 37°C for 3-7 days. After DNA extraction a Nested PCR, using primers designed to identify *T. marneffi* 18S rDNA gene sequence, was performed. Automated DNA sequencing of the PCR products was done using the Applied Biosystems 3730xl DNA Analyzer.

RESULTS: *Talaromyces marneffi* were identified in culture from 4 wild mammals. The Nested PCR results show positive identification with the amplification of an approximately 400-bp fragment, confirming the *T. marneffi* identification in 1/1 Brown hare, 1/5 Beech