

The increasing concern surrounding the presence of *Angiostrongylus cantonensis* in Mediterranean Europe

Jaume-Ramis, S., Martínez-Ortí, A. Pons, N., Delgado-Serra, S., Arango, M., Bargues, L. M, Mas-Coma, S; Rafuse Haines, L., Paredes-Esquivel, C.

Neuroangiostrongyliasis, an emerging zoonotic disease caused by the gastropod-borne nematode *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*, poses a growing concern. The arrival of the rat lungworm in Mediterranean Europe was first reported in Mallorca in 2018, by conducting parasitological surveillance in hedgehogs. More recently the parasite was reported in Valencia, mainland Spain. In humans, this infection can lead to painful and complex clinical manifestations associated with eosinophilic meningitis, often due to the accidental or deliberate ingestion of raw or undercooked snails. In Mallorca, we have also detected *A. cantonensis* in *R. rattus* and *R. norvegicus*, the primary definitive hosts, while 11% of gastropods from endemic hotspots carry the parasite. Knowledge gaps persist regarding competent intermediate and paratenic hosts and their impact on food industries, wildlife and human populations. Given frequent ship traffic between Mallorca and other European countries, proactive surveillance is vital for early diagnosis in the region. Following a One Health approach, we present recent updates on the epidemiological scenario of this important pathogenic invader in a tourism-based area where snails are historically consumed.

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