

Abstract

Avian contact zones were suggested to act as barriers to parasite expansions. I studied haemosporidian parasites (genera *Plasmodium*, *Haemoproteus*, and *Leucocytozoon*) of two Nightingale species which meet in a contact zone in Europe. In total 20 lineages of parasites were detected. Surprisingly, all common lineages were shared by the two host species. The parasite prevalence vary between species (Trush Nightingales were more often parasitized than Common Nightingales.) but did not vary to a large extent within zones inside species. Parasitemia of the most frequent *Haemoproteus* LULU1 lineage assessed by Real-Time PCR method did not differ significantly between the two host species. Six out of nine hybrids of the nightingale species were parasitized. Haemosporidian lineages found in hybrids were also frequent in the parental species. In conclusion, the nightingale contact zone seems to have only little (if any) effect on the distribution of haemosporidian parasites.