

A response to the comments by Heylen *et al.* in the preceding article

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The two *Ixodes* nymphs presented in our article were sampled from a Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*) captured during the spring migration period in Finland. We considered the nymphs to be different to those of *I. ricinus*. It came out that excepting the nymphs of *I. ricinus* the collections in the Finnish Museum of Natural History could not provide us with relevant reference material of any other species. Our request for a loan of nymphs of other *Ixodes* species headed to another museum was not responded. As the next step we send the sample to the British Museum (Natural History) for identification. The museum collections were thought to possess materials of nymphs of various European *Ixodes* species. The response letter from the museum was undersigned by P.D. Hill-

yard, a well-known specialists of *Ixodes*. In addition to the book "Ticks of North-West Europe" Hillyard has worked out a paper of *Ixodes frontalis* with Lundqvist and Grey as shown in the list of references. You propose that the two nymphs belong to *I. ricinus*. The discrepancy of the two identifications makes us difficult to take either of them as granted. It rather seems to us that identification of *Ixodes* -nymphs on the bases of morphological characteristics is still very problematic. Accordingly, we prefer to look forward to another bases for identification viz. DNA bar coding. Until then we provide the nymphs with two identification labels and reference to the two papers published in Memoranda.

The authors