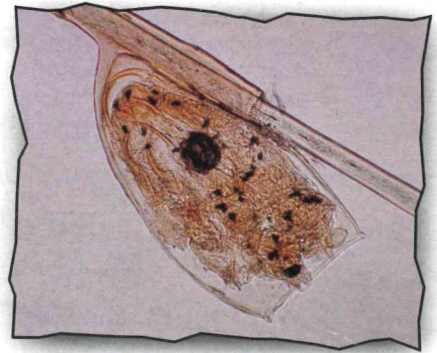


But what if the habitat is you? Like it or not, we humans can be host to quite a number of organisms.

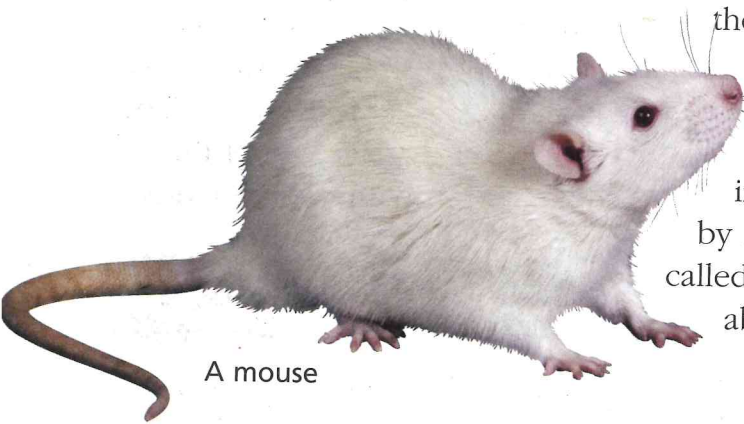
Head lice love clean human hair. Lice grasp hair with a single claw on each of their feet. These claws are amazingly powerful. A louse can resist a pull of one kilogramme! Lice lay eggs called nits, which they glue to your hair.

A single louse can lay about 300 eggs over six weeks. Lice may be easily removed with medicine from the chemist.



A lice nit on hair

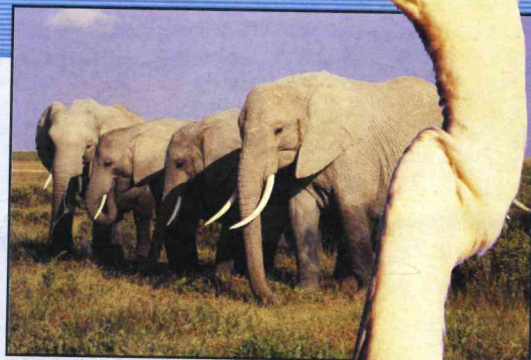
Another common parasite is the flea. Fleas can jump over two hundred times their own length. They like to hop from one human host to another. Fleas bite through your skin to suck your blood. Back in the Middle Ages, fleas, carried by rats and mice, spread the disease called the Black Death. This caused about twenty-five million deaths.



A mouse

**MATTER OF FACT**

Skin parasites are also a common problem for large animals. Ticks, mites and lice are very difficult for an animal like the elephant to remove. The African cattle egret lands on the backs of large animals and picks out the parasites with its beak. The bird gets an easy meal and the herd animal gets rid of some troublesome pests.



An egret