First Record of *Geomantis larvoides* Pantel, 1896 (Mantidae) from Albania with an updated checklist of Albanian Mantodea

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Abstract: One mantid species, *Geomantis larvoides* (Mantodea: Mantidae), was recorded for the first time from the area of Albania. The new finding increases the number of Mantodea species known from Albania to six. An updated checklist of the Albanian mantids is provided.

Key words: Mantodea, *Geomantis*, new record, Albania, Balkan Peninsula, checklist

Introduction

There are only a few papers concerning the fauna of the Albanian mantids, which usually provide single records on these insects. Moreover, the suborder Mantodea has never been a subject of regular studies in Albania. Most recently, Agabii et al. (2010), Battiston et al. (2010), and Heller, Bohn (2012) summarised the diversity of Mantodea in the country providing records on five species belonging to this group, with no record of *Geomantis larvoides*.

The aim of this paper is to provide the first exact data on the occurrence of *Geomantis larvoides* within the territory of Albania as well as to present an updated checklist of Mantodea found in this country. The current work is the sixth part of the studies that are focused on the Albanian insects collected during scientific expeditions to Albania, which were organized by the Department of Invertebrate Zoology and Hydrobiology, University of Łódź (Jaskuła 2007, Przewoźny et al. 2008, 2010, Devetak et al. 2012, Jaskuła et al. 2012).

Material and Methods

All mantids were collected using entomological hand nets or by hand catching during three expeditions: “Amphi-Balkan Expedition II” in 2006, “TB-Quest Expedition V” in 2010, and “TB-Quest Expedition VII” in 2011. The material was deposited in the author’s collection (Fig. 1, 2).

Results

**Mantodea Burmeister, 1838**

Mantidae Burmeister, 1838

*Geomantis larvoides* Pantel, 1896


General distribution: Albania, Croatia, Greece, France, Italy (including Sardinia and Sicily), Portugal, Spain, also in North Africa and the Near East.

As a result of the present study, the current checklist of Albanian Mantodea is as follows:

Family: Empusidae Burmeister, 1838

*Empusa fasciata* Brullé, 1832

Family: Mantidae Burmeister, 1838

*Ameles decolor* (Charpentier, 1825)

*Ameles spallanzania* (Rossi, 1792)

**Geomantis larvoides** Pantel, 1896

*Iris oratoria* (Linnaeus, 1758)

*Mantis religiosa* (Linnaeus, 1758)
Discussion

The occurrence of Geomantis larvoides in Albania is reported for the first time. The new finding increases the species richness of the Albanian Mantodea to six species that constitute 67% of the Balkan species belonging to this suborder. Taking into account the fauna of the other countries on the Balkan Peninsula, especially those that border on Albania, three more mantid species might be found in the country in the future. For example, Rivetina balcanica Kaltenbach, 1963 and Ameles heldrechi Brunner von Wattenwyl, 1882, are known from Greece and Montenegro (Us, Matvejev 1967, Battiston et al. 2010, Heller, Bohn 2012). Findings of Empusa pennata, a typical West Mediterranean species that is actually known on the Balkan Peninsula only from its most western part (Croatia: Dalmatia; Us, Matvejev 1967), are less possible in the territory of Albania.

All the data presented in this study were obtained from a single locality situated in the south-western part of the country. As Geomantis larvoides is not rare on the Balkan Peninsula, being even common in some regions, it can be expected that future studies should find much more localities of this insect in Albania. Moreover, the habitat type (olive grove with maquis shrubland as surroundings) that was occupied by the mentioned insect in Butrint village is common not only in the District of Sârande, but also in many other regions of the country.

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Fig. 1. Geomantis larvoides

Fig. 2. Habitat of Geomantis larvoides in olive grove in Butrint village

References


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