

***Oxycarenum lavaterae*, an expansive species new to Romania
(Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Oxycarenidae)**

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KMENT P. 2009: *Oxycarenum lavaterae*, an expansive species new to Romania (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Oxycarenidae). *Acta Musei Moraviae, Scientiae biologicae* (Brno) **94**: 23–25. – *Oxycarenum lavaterae* (Fabricius, 1787) is recorded for the first time in the territory of Romania (Banat). This record confirms a further expansion of its range towards the north and east.

Keywords. Heteroptera, Oxycarenidae, *Oxycarenum lavaterae*, Romania, Bulgaria, range expansion

Introduction

Oxycarenum lavaterae (Fabricius, 1787) is a peculiar member of the family Oxycarenidae (formerly part of Lygaeidae *sensu lato*) with a remarkable life cycle. For recognition of this species see the key by Péricart (1999). The species is trophically bound to plants of the family Malvaceae. In the western Mediterranean it develops on a range of Malvaceae *sensu lato* (incl. former Malvaceae *sensu stricto*, Tiliaceae, Bombacaceae, and Sterculiaceae; cf. BAYER *et al.* 1999), moving to the stems of various trees to overwinter. However, in Italy, central Europe, and the Balkan Peninsula this species occurs on lime trees (*Tilia cordata*, *T. americana*, *T. euchlora*, but avoiding *T. platyphyllos*) on which it breeds as well as hibernates. *Oxycarenum lavaterae* is remarkable for its gregarious way of life, which is especially apparent during the hibernation, when hundreds to many thousands of individuals aggregate on the stems of trees, often in cities and villages. They may sometimes enter human dwellings in great numbers, becoming a nuisance to people or harming cultivated plants (peaches, grapevines, ornamental Malvaceae). For more details of the life-cycle, see reviews by PÉRICART (1999), KMENT *et al.* (2006) and RABITSCH (2008).

***Oxycarenum lavaterae* (Fabricius, 1787)**

Material examined. SW Romania, Banat, Caraş-Severin District, environs of Şopotu Nou (N 44°48'37", E 21°51'15"), 21.–24.viii.2009, 1♂ 1♀, V. Psota lgt., P. Kment det. (coll. National Museum, Praha, Czech Republic).



Discussion

Until the 1980's, *Oxycarenus lavaterae* was known to occur only in the western Mediterranean – Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Canary Islands, Portugal, Spain (incl. Balearic Islands), southern France (incl. Corsica), Italy (incl. Sicily, Sardinia and some small islands) and Malta. It reached central Europe in the southernmost Swiss canton of Ticino and in the east Slovenia (Nova Gorica) and the Dalmatian coast of Croatia (e.g. PÉRICART 1999, 2001; KMENT *et al.* 2006). The distributional records of *O. lavaterae* from tropical Africa and the Arabian peninsula repeated in the literature (e.g. PÉRICART 1999, 2001) are probably based on misidentifications of similar species (cf. KMENT *et al.* 2006).

In the 1980's, *O. lavaterae* began to spread eastwards and northwards. It was recorded from Montenegro (first 1985) (VELIMIROVIĆ *et al.* 1992), Hungary (1994) (KONDOROSY 1995, BÜRGÉS 1997), Slovakia (1995) (BIANCHI & STEHLÍK 1999), Serbia (1996) (PROTIĆ & STOJANOVIĆ 2001), Bulgaria (1998, environs of Sofia) (KALUSHKOV 2000), northern France (1999, environs of Paris) (DENOSMAISON 2001), Austria (2001) (RABITSCH & ADLBAUER 2001), northern Switzerland (2002) (WERMELINGER *et al.* 2005), southern Germany (2004, Baden-Württemberg) (BILLEN 2004) and Czech Republic (2004, southern Moravia) (KMENT *et al.* 2006). It was also newly found on Madeira in July 2001 (MATOCQ & RIBES 2004). RABITSCH (2008) mentioned an indoor record from Finland (in 2003) but establishment of the species so far north appears improbable. This also seems to be true for the documented accidental introduction of *O. lavaterae* with plants imported from Italy to a nursery near Berlin in April 2000 (DECKERT 2004). Currently the species extends as far east as eastern Slovakia (Streda nad Bodrogom – KMENT *et al.* 2003), south-western Romania (this paper) and eastern Bulgaria, where *O. lavaterae* reached the Black Sea coast (Varna, on *Tilia* sp. on Knyaz Boris Boulevard 1 and in front of the Archeological Museum, 11.vi.2009, J. Beránek observ.) (J. Beránek, pers. comm.). Taking the expansion potential of this species into account, its current occurrence in the Transcarpathian Ukraine and other parts of Balkan peninsula can be expected.

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