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The first record of *Tetramorium hungaricum* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) in the Czech Republic

První nález *Tetramorium hungaricum* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) v České republice

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Abstract. We report the discovery of *Tetramorium hungaricum* Rözsler, 1935 (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) near the town of Mikulov, representing a record of a species of ants unknown from the Czech Republic until now and also the most westerly known occurrence of this species.

The myrmicine genus *Tetramorium* Mayr, 1855 contains 459 species and subspecies worldwide that are currently regarded as valid (Bolton 2006). Taxonomically, it is an extremely difficult ant group. Problems persist, especially in the Palaearctic species. Schlick-Steiner et al. (2006) worked on the revision of this group, but many issues remain to be addressed. The redescription of *Tetramorium hungaricum* Röszler, 1935 by Csösz & Markó (2004) is one of the few attempts to resolve one such taxonomic issue.

T. hungaricum was originally described from Hungary as *T. caespitum* ssp. *hungarica* Röszler, 1935 and type material was deposited in the collection of the Natural History Museum, Sibiu (Romania). According to Kratochvíl (cited in Novák & Sadil 1941) this taxon was more closely related to *Tetramorium semilaeve* André, 1883. This opinion was accepted by Novák & Sadil (1941) and, based on the considerable similarity of the two taxa, they regarded *hungaricum* as no more than a variety, *T. semilaeve* v. *hungaricum* Röszler, 1935. On the contrary, Röszler (1951) insisted on the independence of this taxon and raised it to species status. Nevertheless, many authors ignored this act for a long time, probably because of lack of information on the type material (Csösz & Markó 2004). Recently, Markó & Csösz (2002) catalogued Rözsler's collection and studied his type material. They found that the original description of *T. hungaricum* was too superficial, and inadequate for distinguishing it from related species. Therefore they designated a lectotype for this taxon and redescribed it (Csösz & Markó 2004).

In this article, we report the first record of *T. hungaricum* for the Czech Republic. Determination of the specimens was confirmed with certainty within the framework of the currently running project focused on the study and redetermination of Czech myrmecological collections (P. Bezděčka & K. Bezděčková, unpubl. data).

Material examined. Czech Republic, South Moravia, Mikulov, on the south slope of the Svatý Kopeček hill (48°48'17"N, 16°38'33"E), (7165d), 270 m a.s.l., 2.vii.1983, 10 workers, P. Bezděčka lgt., det. et coll.; S. Csösz examined and confirmed in 2009 (using discrimination analysis).

The series of ants was collected directly from a small colony nesting under a stone. The workers were at first sight remarkable for their small size and fine sculpture.

The habitat and nesting of the reported colony correspond with data given by Csösz & Markó (2004), who often found colonies of *T. hungaricum* under the stones on dry, south-exposed dolomitic limestone slopes or sandy grasslands.

The distribution of *T. hungaricum* has not been sufficiently known until now, mainly because of lack of information and frequent confusion of *T. hungaricum* with related species, particularly *T. caespitum* (Linnaeus, 1758) and *T. semilaeve* André, 1883. According to available data it appears to be a Ponto-Caspian or Balcanian element of the European myrmecofauna (Csösz & Markó 2004). The occurrence of *T. hungaricum* is reported from Romania (Rözsler 1943), Hungary, Ukraine, Bulgaria (Csösz & Markó 2004), Austria (Steiner et al. 2005; Schlick-Steiner et al. 2006) and Slovakia (Werner & Wiezik 2007). Intensive field research as well as revision of myrmecological collections might increase the number of known populations of *T. hungaricum* and enlarge the known distributional area of this species. The discovery of *T. hungaricum* near the town of Mikulov represents not only a record of a species unknown from the Czech Republic until now, and the increase of the number of Czech ant species to 107, but is also the most westerly known occurrence of this species.

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SOUHRN

Rod *Tetramorium* Mayr, 1855, a zvláště jeho palearktické druhy, je z hlediska taxonomického považován za jednu z nejtěžších a nejproblematičtějších skupin mravenců (Hymenoptera: Formicidae). Jedním z mála moderních pokusů o řešení taxonomických problémů spojených s tímto rodem je designace lektotypu a redeskripce druhu *Tetramorium hungaricum* Röszler, 1935. V předloženém článku informujeme o prvním nálezu tohoto druhu z území České republiky. Současné rozšíření mravence *T. hungaricum* není dosud přesně známo, podle dostupných údajů se vyskytuje v Rumunsku (Rözsler 1943), v Rakousku (Steiner et al. 2005; Schlick-Steiner et al. 2006), na Ukrajině, v Maďarsku a v Bulharsku (Csösz & Markó 2004) a na Slovensku (Werner & Wiezik 2007). Intenzívní výzkum a revize starších myrmekologických sbírek však mohou přinést další informace o výskytu a rozšíření tohoto druhu. Uvedený nález znamená nejen objevení nového druhu mravence pro Českou republiku, ale zároveň nejzápadnější dosud známý výskyt *T. hungaricum*.