

Ladybird beetles (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) from northern Cyprus, including six new records

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Abstract. During 2000–2001, 21 species of ladybird beetles (Coccinellidae) in 12 genera were recorded in northern Cyprus. Six species are new records for the island of Cyprus, namely: *Cheilomenes propinqua*, *Diomus rubidus*, *Nephus hiekei*, *Nephus nigricans*, *Scymnus pallipediformis* and *Scymnus rubromaculatus*. A noticeably higher number of coccinellid specimens was collected in non-agricultural areas (765 specimens) compared to agricultural areas with only 194 specimens. This difference was mainly caused by the dominance of two abundant species, *C. septempunctata* and *H. variegata*, in non-agricultural areas.

Kurzfassung. In den Jahren 2000–2001 wurden im nördlichen Zypern 21 Arten von Marienkäfern (Coccinellidae) in 12 Gattungen festgestellt. Sechs Arten sind neu für Zypern, nämlich *Cheilomenes propinqua*, *Diomus rubidus*, *Nephus hiekei*, *Nephus nigricans*, *Scymnus pallipediformis* und *Scymnus rubromaculatus*. In landwirtschaftlich nicht genutzten Flächen wurde mit 765 Exemplaren eine signifikant höhere Anzahl von Marienkäfern gefunden als in landwirtschaftlich genutzten Flächen (194 Exemplare). Der Unterschied ist hauptsächlich durch die Dominanz der beiden häufigen Arten *C. septempunctata* und *H. variegata* in landwirtschaftlich nicht genutzten Gebieten hervorgerufen.

Key words. Ladybird beetles, Coccinellidae, Coleoptera, Cyprus, Mediterranean, Middle East.

Introduction

Coccinellidae (ladybird beetles) comprise approximately 5200 described species from all regions of the world. Most of them are predaceous: both larvae and adults feed chiefly on soft-bodied insects such as psyllids, aphids, coccids, and mites (KLAUSNITZER 1966). Throughout temperate regions, they are an important factor in the biological control of agricultural and horticultural insect pests (HODEK & HONEK 1996). The presence, frequency, and diversity of ladybirds are valuable indicators for the status of non-agricultural and agricultural areas, and faunistic studies can provide meaningful information on the ecological status of agricultural and horticultural fields with special emphasis on the use of pesticides. The aim of this paper is to present a first overview of the coccinellid fauna of northern Cyprus, together with species distribution, habitats and hosts.

Material and methods

During this survey, samples of the Coccinellidae were collected in agricultural and non-agricultural areas throughout northern Cyprus. In order to represent the major ecological regions,