

NOTES ON SOME CERAMBYCIDAE (COLEOPTERA) FROM THE MALTESE ISLANDS

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ABSTRACT

Two species of cerambycid beetles are recorded. Of these, one is a new record for the Maltese Islands, while the other species is recorded for the first time since 1907.

Following the recent revision by Schembri and Sama of the Cerambycidae found in the Maltese Islands (Schembri & Sama, 1986), the present author adds a further species and confirms the presence of another species last recorded by Cameron and Caruana Gatto over eighty years ago (Cameron & Caruana Gatto, 1907).

Nathrius brevipennis (Mulsant, 1839)
(New record for the Maltese Islands).

Gozo: Marsalforn Valley. 6-VI-90 1 ex. leg. & Coll. D. Mifsud.

The specimen was attracted to light. Vegetation in the area, which may be considered as a disturbed habitat, included *Ceratonia siliqua* L. and *Morus* sp.

The larvae of *N. brevipennis* are known to develop in various broad-leaved trees particularly *Salix*, *Castanea*, *Quercus ilex*, *Pistacia*, *Ceratonia*. It has also been found on conifers including *Cupressus*, *Pinus halepensis* and *Picea excelsa* (Sama, 1988). In Sicily the larva is commonly found on *Ceratonia siliqua* (Sama & Schurmann, 1980).

It is difficult to ascertain the status of *N. brevipennis* in the Maltese Islands. The fact that it has never been recorded previously may be attributed to:

- (a) relatively recent introduction;
- (b) its small size, making it easily overlooked;
- (c) rarity or localised distribution;

The Maltese Islands would fall within the geographical range of distribution of the species. *N. brevipennis* is native to the Western Mediterranean, but has spread throughout the whole Mediterranean and is now nearly cosmopolitan, with records from Central Europe, Caucasus, Iran, China, North & South America (Sama, 1988).

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Trichoferus cinereus (Villiers, 1789)

Malta: St. Andrew's, 3-VII-91. 1 ex. leg. & Coll. D. Mifsud.

Since it was first recorded at Marsaxlokk and Mdina in 1907 (Cameron & Caruana Gatto, 1907), this species has not been encountered in the Maltese Islands. The present record is of a specimen taken from a coastal rocky steppe area dominated by *Foeniculum vulgare*. *Ficus carica* was also present.

T. cinereus is a xerophilic species, its larva developing in various broad-leaved trees. It can develop in very dry wood, and can also attack furniture, being thus considered to be a pest (Sama, 1988). In Sicily it is found especially on *Ficus carica* and *Quercus* sp. (Sama & Schurmann, 1980).

The species is known to occur in South Europe, North Africa, Asia Minor, Caucasus and Iran. It has been recorded from all of Italy, including the Islands (Sama 1988).

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