SHORT COMMUNICATION

First record of the Nearctic Ozognathus cornutus (LeConte, 1859) (Coleoptera: Ptinidae: Anobiinae) in Cyprus

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Summary The Nearctic spider beetle Ozognathus cornutus (LeConte, 1859) is recorded for the first time in Cyprus during entomological surveys on alien Eucalyptus spp. The biology of this alien species is still understudied. A short overview of the species distribution and ecology in the Mediterranean is presented, adding a new host plant for the beetle.

Additional keywords: alien species, Eastern Mediterranean, Eucalyptus, non-native, spider beetles

The New World genus Ozognathus LeConte, 1861 (Ptinidae: Anobiinae) is represented by 11 species native to North and South America (White 1974; 1975; Zahradník and Mifsud, 2005; Trócoli et al., 2020). Originating from the Nearctic zoogeographic realm, Ozognathus cornutus (LeConte, 1859) has been accidentally introduced outside its native range to the Western Palearctic, where it has been recorded in France (Allemand et al., 2008), Germany (Allemand et al., 2008), Gibraltar (GONHS, 2017), Israel (Miłkowski, 2019), Italy (including Sardinia and Sicily) (Cusimano et al., 2015; Bazzato et al., 2021; Cerasa and Lo Verde, 2021), Latvia (Telnov et al., 2016), Malta (Zahradník and Mifsud, 2005), Portugal (Madeira) (Zahradník and Mifsud, 2005), Spain (including Canary Islands) (Bercedo et al., 2005; Viñolas, 2017; Trócoli et al., 2020), Switzerland (Germann and Schmidt, 2017), Tunisia (Zahradník and Mifsud, 2005) and the United Kingdom (Stenhouse, 2017) (Fig. 1).

During entomological field surveys concerning alien insects on Eucalyptus spp., three male Ozognathus specimens were collected and identified using species diagnoses of Zaradník and Mifsud (2005) and Stenhouse (2017). The specimens were deposited at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece as part of the first author’s MSc Thesis.

Material examined: Cyprus, Limassol (Lemesos), Marina (Molos), (34.6750° N, 33.0475° E), 0 m alt., collected during beat-sheet sampling on Eucalyptus spp., urban area - municipal park by the sea, 23.iv.2021 and 14.v.2021 (Fig. 2), 2 males collected.

Cyprus, Limassol (Lemesos), Port, (34.6453° N, 33.0008° E), 0 m alt., collected during beat-sheet sampling on Eucalyptus spp., windbreaker near crop, 31.iii.2021, 1 male collected.

The ecology of O. cornutus is still rather unknown and the species has been recorded at a wide range of habitats including agricultural, coastal, urban and woodland areas (Zaradník and Mifsud, 2005; Miłkowski, 2019; Trócoli et al., 2020). Ozognathus cornutus is regarded as polyphagous, being associated with 38 different host plants (Bazzato et al., 2021). In Mediterranean countries, it has been collected from various plant spe-

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First record of *Ozognathus cornutus* in Cyprus

Species such as *Allium sativum, Carduus* spp., *Eriobotrya japonica, Euphorbia characias, Ficus carica, Fraxinus angustifolia syriaca, Phoenix* vulgare, *Phoenix dactylifera, Retama monosperma, Robinia pseudocacia, Quercus* suber, *Schefflera arboricola* and *Scolymus hispanicus* (Bercedo et al., 2005; Miłkowski, 2019; Trócoli et al., 2020; Bazzato et al., 2021) as well as from dried fruit of *Prunus amygdalus* (Allemand et al., 2008). The beetle has been regarded as saproxylophagous, feeding on decaying plant tissues such as dried fruit and woodborders’ faeces in galleries as well as inhabiting galls of various Cecidomyiidae and Cynipidae (Miłkowski, 2019; Trócoli et al., 2020; Cerasa and Lo Verde, 2021).

Although, eucalypts in the sampled areas were heavily infested with *Glycaspis brimblecombei* Moore, 1964 lerps (Limassol marina) as well as galls of *Leptocybe invasa* Fisher and La Salle, 2004 and *Ophelimus maskelli* (Ashmead, 1900) (Limassol marina and port), no associations or interactions with *O. cornutus* were observed.
According to Cusimano et al. (2014) more records are anticipated as the presence of *O. cornutus* in Europe has been associated with international trade. During our surveys, one specimen was collected from Limassol port which is the island’s largest commercial port, while the other two male specimens were collected from the Limassol marina, approximately 3 km from Limassol port. This potentially pinpoints the original point of entry of *O. cornutus* to the country. The presence of *O. cornutus* in Cyprus does not come as a surprise, given its extended presence in the Mediterranean Basin and recent records from neighbouring Israel (Miłkowski, 2019). Due to the wide range of native and non-native host plant species, *O. cornutus* is expected to become widespread in Cyprus.

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**Literature cited**


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ΣΥΝΤΟΜΗ ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ

Πρώτη καταγραφή του Βορειοαμερικανικού σκαθαριού Ozognathus cornutus (LeConte, 1859) (Coleoptera: Ptinidae: Anobiinae) στην Κύπρο

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Περίληψη Το Βορειοαμερικανικό σκαθάρι Ozognathus cornutus (LeConte, 1859) καταγράφεται για πρώτη φορά στην Κύπρο κατά τη διάρκεια εντομολογικών ερευνών σε ξενικά είδη ευκαλύπτων. Η βιολογία του ξενικού αυτού είδους είναι ακόμη σε μεγάλο βαθμό άγνωστη. Παρουσιάζεται μια σύντομη επισκόπηση της κατανομής του είδους και των φυτών ξενιστών του στη Μεσόγειο, προσθέτοντας ένα νέο φυτικό είδος ξενιστή για το σκαθάρι.