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Two rare spider species (Araneae: Araneidae, Theridiidae) found in the Šumava Mts.

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Dolejš P. & Růckl K. 2017: Two rare spider species (Araneae: Araneidae, Theridiidae) found in the Šumava Mts. – Journal of the National Museum (Prague), Natural History Series 186: 85–92.

Abstract: During an arachnological survey in the Šumava National Park in 2016, two very rare spider species were discovered: *Araneus saevus* (Araneidae) was recorded for the second time, 45 years after its first report in the Czech Republic. The species is therefore no longer regionally extinct, and can be considered critically endangered. *Theridion boesenbergi* (Theridiidae) was recorded for the first time in the Šumava Mts. Ecological characterisation of the species is improved, being more psychrophilous than was previously expected. Almost all collected specimens of both species from the Czech Republic are deposited in the National Museum in Prague.

Keywords: *Araneus saevus*, *Theridion boesenbergi*, national park, spruce, Czechia

Received: March 30, 2017 | Accepted: July 19, 2017 | Issued: December 30, 2017

Introduction

The spider fauna of the Šumava Mts. is relatively well known, thanks mainly to research of Dr. Antonín Kůrka from the National Museum (Prague) and his collaborators (e.g. Kůrka 1982, 1990, 1992, 1995a, b, 1996, 1997). Currently, 424 spider species are known from the Šumava Mts., eight of them (*Araneus saevus*, *Carorita limnaea*, *Clubiona norvegica*, *Dictyna major*, *Gnaphosa badia*, *G. microps*, *Pardosa ferruginea* and *P. hyperborea*) live only in the Šumava Mts. within the Czech Republic (Kůrka & Hradská 2010). However, many areas with specific microhabitats have not been investigated yet. Research on such localities may bring surprising results and new species for the Šumava Mts.

Material and methods

Spiders were collected using standard arachnological methods: sweeping, beating, sieving and hand collecting. All individuals were fixed in 80% ethanol and identified accord-



Fig. 1. *Araneus saevus*, female (P6A-6385), habitus. Photo: P. Dolejš.

ing to Miller (1971) and Nentwig et al. (2017). Photos were made using an Olympus SZX16 stereomicroscope equipped with an Infinity 2 camera and a motor focusing CB-ZM. Voucher specimens are deposited in the National Museum, Prague (NMP). The numbers of mapping grid squares follow Buchar (1982). The map was created using the on-line application BioLib (2017).

Results and discussion

Araneus saevus (L. Koch, 1872) (Figs. 1–4)

Kvilda, north of the village, 1093 m a.s.l., 49°2'8"N, 13°34'38"E (grid square 6947), eastern edge of the spruce forest by the road (at a height of 2 m), 15 August 2016, 1 ♀, leg. Václav Kroc & Kryštof Rückl, hand collecting, coll. NMP (P6A-6385).

Araneus saevus is a Holarctic orb-weaver species occurring in Palaearctic and Nearctic regions.

In Palaearctic region, it is especially known from central Europe, Scandinavia (Farlund 2012, Koponen et al. 2016, Kronstedt 2001), the European part of Russia, Caucasus and other countries of the former USSR (Mikhailov 2013). In central Europe, it was found in Germany (Blick 2011), Poland (Prószyński & Staręga 1971), Slovakia (Miller 1971), Switzerland and Austria (Nentwig et al. 2017).

Among other European countries, Portugal (Cardoso & Morano 2010), Italy (Pantini & Isaia 2017), Serbia (Deltshv et al. 2003), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Komnenov 2009), Bulgaria (Blagoev et al. 2002), Macedonia (Petkovski 2009), Romania (Weiss & István 2000),



Fig. 2. *Araneus saevus*, female (P6A-6385), epigyne (scale bar 0.5 mm). Orig.: P. Dolejš.

Albania (Deltshev et al. 2011) and Turkey (Bayram et al. 2008) are also worth being mentioned. In Europe, *A. saevus* probably prefers spruce forests (Prószyński & Staręga 1971).

In the Nearctic region, *A. saevus* occurs from Alaska to New York and Oregon. In contrast to the Palaearctic region, it has different natural habitats there: poplar trees (*Populus* sp.), lodgepole pines (*Pinus contorta*) (Levi 1971), and dense forests with oak and walnut trees (Fitch 1963). In North America, it has been described as *Araneus solitarius*, until it was found to be identical with European *A. saevus* (Levi 1971).

The discovery of this orb-weaver is the second confirmed discovery in the territory of the Czech Republic. The first one dates to 1971, when an adult female was collected by beating on the edge of the spruce forest in a peat bog in Horská Kvilda (Kůrka 1981). The specimen is deposited in the NMP (P6A-4529). The record of the female in 2016 means that the species is not regionally extinct (cf. Řezáč et al. 2015), and we suggest treating it as critically endangered instead. In Slovakia, *A. saevus* has been reported only once. It was a female from František Miller's collection, found near Čierny Balog in 1957, deposited also in the NMP (P6A-776/54) (Kůrka 2004).

Surprisingly, *Araneus saevus* was not found in the Bayerischer Wald National Park in Germany (Weiss 2011). It is probably an overlooked species, because it builds its webs mostly high in the treetops (Kůrka et al. 2015).



Fig. 3. *Araneus saevus*, biotope at the proximity of the Kvilda village. Photo: V. Kroc.

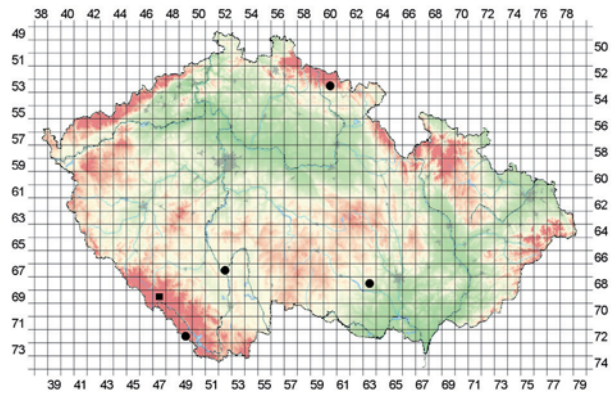


Fig. 4. Distribution map of *Araneus saevus* (square) and *Theridion boesenbergi* (circles) in the Czech Republic.



Fig. 5. *Theridion boesenbergi*, male (P6A-6399), habitus. Photo: P. Dolejš.



Fig. 6. *Theridion boesenbergi*, female (P6A-6398), habitus. Photo: P. Dolejš.



Fig. 7. *Theridion boesenbergi*, male (P6A-6399), palp (scale bar 0.1 mm). Orig.: P. Dolejš.

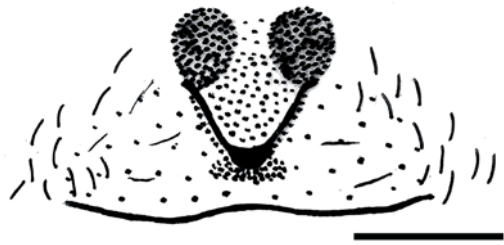


Fig. 8. *Theridion boesenbergi*, female (P6A-6398), epigyne (scale bar 0.1 mm). Orig.: P. Dolejš.

***Theridion boesenbergi* Strand, 1904 (Figs. 4–9)**

Horní Planá, south-west of the village, 870 m a.s.l., 48°43'14"N, 13°58'22"E (grid square 7249), on the meadow in Úval-Zvonková Natural Monument, 15 June 2016, 1 ♀, leg. Petr Dolejš, beating, coll. NMP (P6A-6398).

Horní Planá, south-west of the village, 870 m a.s.l., 48°43'14"N, 13°58'22"E (grid square 7249), spruce in Úval-Zvonková Natural Monument, 15 June 2016, 1 ♂, leg. Petr Dolejš & Michal Tkoč, sweeping, coll. NMP (P6A-6399).

Theridion boesenbergi is a European, extra-Mediterranean cob-web spider (Buchar & Růžička 2002). It has been recorded from Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine (Kůrka & Vaněk 2010 and referenc-

es therein, Kostanjšek & Kuntner 2015, Pantini & Isaia 2017). The spiders occur mainly on spruce branches, but also on pine branches, less frequently on peat bogs, under stones or among vegetation, up to the elevation of 1800 m a.s.l. (Karasch 2003, Blick & Goßner 2006, Kielhorn 2007, Lemke 2009).

Until now, the species had been found only three times in the Czech Republic. The first time, it was found in 1941 at the Mohelenská hadcová step National Nature Reserve – two males are deposited in the NMP (P6A-771/15 and P6A-771/16) (Kůrka 2003). The second finding came 68 years later, from spruces near a limestone quarry in Lánov in the Krkonoše Mts. (Kůrka & Vaněk 2010) – the collected female is deposited also in the NMP (P6A-5423). For the third time, the species was discovered in the Plziny Nature Park in South Bohemia (Svojanovská 2014) – the voucher specimen is deposited in the collection of Hana Svojanovská. Our finding is the first one in the Šumava Mts., thus increasing the number of spider species known from the Šumava Mts. to 425. In Czechia, it is a critically endangered species (Řezáč et al. 2015).

According to Buchar & Růžička (2002), *T. boesenbergi* was known from only one record from Thermophyticum – the serpentine steppe (Miller 1947). However, recent findings from the mountain ranges (Kůrka & Vaněk 2010, this work) question the relationship between the spider and this phytogeographic district. Recently, one finding is known from Mesophyticum, and two findings from Oreophyticum, but from exposed habitats.



Fig. 9. *Theridion boesenbergi*, biotope of the Úval-Zvonková Natural Monument. Photo: P. Dolejš.

Acknowledgements

We thank Václav Kroc for help with collecting the orb-weavers. Research in the Šumava National Park (NPS) was allowed by the decree “SZ NPS 01912/2016/5 – NPS 03096/2016“, and could be performed thanks to the field station of the Natural History Museum in the village of Horská Kvilda. This work was financially supported by Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic (DKRVO 2017/15, National Museum, 00023272).

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