

Research on Hemiptera Auchenorrhyncha of Aspromonte (southern Italy)

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Hemiptera Auchenorrhyncha are a basic component of the fauna of phytophagous insects in most terrestrial ecosystems and are also characterized by high taxonomic diversity. Despite important recent progress, knowledge about Italian fauna is still partially incomplete, both from a faunistic and taxonomic, as well as ecological point of view. The aim of the research was to investigate the Auchenorrhyncha fauna of the Aspromonte Massif, which is known to be an important biodiversity hotspot in the Apennine biogeographical context. The research, which is still ongoing, began in June 2018 and involved sampling carried out in different types of habitats and in different seasons, taking into account the considerable ecological diversity present in Aspromonte. In particular, forest habitats, mountain and summit grasslands, wetlands, as well as markedly xerophilous and Mediterranean scrub habitats were investigated. The first results confirm that the Auchenorrhyncha fauna of Aspromonte is of considerable interest and needs to be further studied, mainly for the presence of endemic species still unknown and for the faunistic and chorological interest of many findings. Some species new for science have been found, one already published (*Psammotettix aspromontanus* Poggi, Manti et Castiglione) and others whose description is in progress, belonging to the genera *Chlorita*, *Jassargus*, *Aconurella* and *Doratura*, whilst specimens attributable to others probably new taxa are under ongoing studies, belonging to the genera *Florodelphax* and *Arocephalus*. Among the numerous findings of faunistic interest, there is the collection, after forty years from the last published finding, of the endemic subspecies from Calabria *Conomelus lorifer calabricus* Dlabola, however new for Aspromonte. Another example of interesting finding is *Zygina luteipennis* Rey, a species for which there are only old citations from southern France and, generally, from Italy, without further specification; this finding makes possible a taxonomic study of this species, necessary for a long time. These results confirm once again the high interest of the entomological fauna of Aspromonte, characterized by a high rate of biodiversity and endemism.

KEY WORDS: Hemiptera, Auchenorrhyncha, Aspromonte.