

Libelloides cunii (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880)
(Neuroptera: Ascalaphidae)
new record for Morocco

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HÁVA, J. & ÁBRAHÁM, L.: *Libelloides cunii* (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880) (Neuroptera: Ascalaphidae) new record for Morocco.

Abstract: The species *Libelloides cunii* (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880) is newly recorded from Africa and Morocco.

Keywords: Faunistics, Ascalaphidae, *Libelloides*, Morocco.

Introduction

The majority of the Ascalaphidae species are relatively large compared to other insect groups. The number of described taxa is about 450 species and subspecies all around the world (TJEDER 1992). According to our knowledge, their distribution is limited to the tropical and dry (desert and semi-desert) areas, where their diversity culminates. Their taxa need revision, since the last significant comprehensive monograph (WEELE 1909) was published more than a hundred years ago.

Although, the Ascalaphidae fauna in the western Palearctic is well known (ASPÖCK et al. 2001) however the first occurrence of an African species, *Ascalaphus festivus* Rambur, 1842 from Europe was recently recorded in Sardinia (Italy) (PANTALEONI et al. 2013). From Morocco, in North Africa, two new species, namely *Cirroptus berbericus* Ábrahám, 2010 and *Agadirius trojani* Badano & Pantaleoni, 2012 were recently described (ÁBRAHÁM 2010, BADANO & PANTALEONI 2012).

In the present paper, we reports the first record of *Libelloides cunii* (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880) from Morocco which is also its first record out of Europe as well.

Material and method

In spring, the material was collected by a net in the High Atlas Mountains. The specimens were given to the first author for identifying and publishing.

Results and discussion

The genus *Libelloides* recently contains 16 species and subspecies known from the Palaearctic region (ASPÖCK et al. 2001, HÁVA 2000). One species, *Libelloides ictericus* (Charpentier, 1825) was collected from North Africa including Morocco. In the present paper, a new owl-fly species, *Libelloides cunii* (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880) for the Moroccan fauna is reported.

Libelloides cunii (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880) (Fig. 1).

Material examined: Morocco, High Atlas, Tizi-n-Test, 2-4.1995, Jan Macek lgt., 6 specimens, J. Háva det., (4 NMPC, 2 JHAC).

Deposited: NMPC - National Museum, Prague, Czech Republic; JHAC - Private Entomological Laboratory & Collection, Únětice u Prahy, Prague-west, Czech Republic.

Taxonomical status: For a long time, the valid taxonomic status of *Libelloides cunii* has been controversial because it was considered to be a colour variety of *Ascalaphus baeticus* var. *cunii* Sélys-Longchamps, 1880 or subspecies of *Libelloides baeticus* (Rambur, 1838) (ASPÖCK et al. 1980, AISTLEITNER 1980).

Mainly the Spanish entomologists considered *Libelloides cunii* as a valid (NAVÁS 1901, 1912, WEELE 1909, LACROIX 1923, VIDAL & LÓPEZ 1943, BERLAND 1962, MONSERRAT 1985, SÉMÉRIA & BERLAND 1988, ASPÖCK et al. 2001) since this species had only Iberian distribution till now.

Larva: The first schematic figure of the larva was published by NAVÁS (1915) and later the same figure was issued by LACROIX (1923). Finally, WEELE (1909) also illustrated a larva (L1) hatching from an egg which was given by Navás. BADANO & PANTALEONI (2012) did not keyed the larva in the latest comprehensive paper.

Distribution: Due to the only little morphological differences between *Libelloides baeticus* and *Libelloides cunii* and the distribution of the two taxa overlaps, the faunistic data were confused.

After the original description, it was firstly mentioned by WEELE (1909) from Portugal. Later, LACROIX (1923) published a new occurrence from South France beside Spain and Portugal.

Based on LACROIX (1923) the occurrence of the species in southern France was also cited by BERLAND (1962) but other French researchers eg. PUISSÉGUR (1967), DELIRY & FATON (2010) considered its French distribution uncertain.

The records from Portugal (WEELE 1909) are also uncertain, this is why LETARDI et al. (2013) did not publish *Libelloides cunii* in the Portugal checklist. MONTERRAT et al. (2012) also cite this species only from Spain in the Iberian Peninsula.

Consequently, this species is reliably known from Spain and Morocco which is new record for Africa either.

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Fig. 1: *Libelloides cunii* (Sélys-Longchamps, 1880) from Morocco, High Atlas, Tizi-n-Test

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