FOLIA HISTORICO-NATURALIA MUSEI MATRAENSIS
2026 50: 59–65
ISSN 0134-1243 (Print) ISSN 2062-7602 (Online)
Published: 09 November 2026

Faunistic data on the insects of Tenerife (Canary Islands, Spain)

Péter Szecsei

Abstract: This paper summarizes occurrence data of insect species detected by the author at Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, on 4–11 August 2025, at four different types of habitats. As a result, 32 insect species are listed, of which 10 species are endemic to the Canary Islands.

Introduction

Tenerife is the largest island of the Canary Islands in Macaronesia, and located in the North Atlantic Ocean, 340 kilometers west of the coasts of Africa. The island has an extended vertical dimension, as the volcano Teide is located at the centre of it, and is characterized by climate and vegetation zones that vary according to altitude and form various habitats: from the cultivated lands with plantations and coastal urban areas, through laurel forests, pine trees, and the desert area of brooms, to the summit of Teide, where almost no vegetation exists.

Numerous studies were carried out using faunistical or zoogeographical approach on the insects of Tenerife. There are papers reporting species new to the island, for instance, Machado (2006) indicated the presence of *Harmonia axyridis* (Pallas, 1773) in the Canaries for the first time. Ashmole & Ashmole (1988) investigated the insect fauna in Tenerife using a zoogeographical approach, however, for example, they did not treat Orthoptera, as this insect order was not represented during their survey.

The aim of the present paper is to provide additional data on the most common and the characteristic insect species of four different habitats of Tenerife, with special regard to the endemic species.

Material and methods

The observations took place in four different habitat types both day and night at different altitudes above sea level which delineates different zones of climate: arid coastal areas under 200 m, humid coastal areas at 250–500 m, laurel forests at 750–950 m, arid semi-desert zone at the slopes of Teide at 2000–2300 m. The southern side of the island is drier than the northern, yet there is no significant difference in the altitudinal allocation of climatic zones between the sides, as the southern side is approximately half as steep as the northern.

The specimens were picked (observed) individually or caught with an insect net, then identified by visual observation (using a powerful magnifier when needed). The occurrence data were recorded in a diary, and photographs were taken or specimens were preserved. Collected specimens are deposited in the collections of the Hungarian Natural History Museum of the Hungarian National Museum Public Collection Centre in Budapest (HNHM) and in the private collection of the author (SZP).

Taxa are arranged alphabetically, and species endemic to the Canary Islands are marked with an „**E**”. Identification of specimens and the indication of the endemic species are based on Wollaston (1861, 1864), Becker (1908),

DOI: https://doi.org/10.69595/FoliaNatMatra.2026.50.04

Mistshenko (1937), Bey-Bienko (1954), Bey-Bienko & Mishchenko (1964), Gangwere *et al*. (1972), Hohmann *et al*. (1993), Wiemers (1995a, 1995b), Juan *et al*. (1996), Emerson & Kolm (2005), De Los Santos *et al*. (2006), Moya *et al*. (2006), Machado & Oromí (2000), d'Abrera (2017), Macià *et al*. (2022), and Tshikolovets (2025, 2026). Nomenclature is actualized based on Bánki *et al*. (2026).

Results

BLATTODEA
Blattidae Latreille, 1810

Periplaneta americana (Linnaeus, 1758) – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 74 m, 28°24'12.1"N, 16°34'43.2"W, 04.08.2025, 06.08.2025.

COLEOPTERA
Coccinellidae Latreille, 1807

Harmonia axyridis (Pallas, 1773) – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 74 m, 28°24'12.1"N, 16°34'43.2"W, 06.08.2025.

Curculionidae Latreille, 1802

Mesites fusiformis Wollaston, 1861 **E** – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, Acantilados de los Roques, seashore, flying, 30 m, 28°24'17.2"N, 16°34'31.9"W, 06.08.2025, SZP.

Tenebrionidae Latreille, 1802

Gonocephalum prolixum (Erichson, 1843) – Santa Cruz de Tenerife, San Andrés, Playa de las Teresitas, seashore, in sand, 2 m, 28°30'37.6"N, 16°11'00.2"W, 2026.08.07., SZP.
Hegeter amaroides Solier, 1835 **E** – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, night at light, 74 m, 28°24'12.1"N, 16°34'43.2"W, 04.08.2025, SZP, 06.08.2025, SZP.
Pimelia ascendens Wollaston, 1864 **E** – La Orotava region (Parque Nacional del Teide), southern slope of Teide, 2283 m, 28°15'08.5"N, 16°37'25.5"W, 09.08.2025.

DIPTERA
Asilidae Latreille, 1802

Promachus vexator Becker, 1908 **E** – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, Acantilados de los Roques, 41 m, 28°24'13.7"N, 16°34'32.6"W, 06.08.2025.

Syrphidae Latreille, 1802

Eristalis tenax (Linnaeus, 1758) – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, night at light, 75 m, 28°24'12.04"N, 16°34'43.49"W, 04.08.2025, SZP.

HEMIPTERA
Lygaeidae Schilling, 1829

Caenocoris nerii (Germar, 1847) – La Orotava town, Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja, 374 m, 28°23'21.1"N, 16°31'24.3"W, 08.08.2025.

Pyrrhocoridae Amyot & Audinet-Serville, 1843

Scantius aegyptius (Linnaeus, 1758) – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 80 m, 28°24’14.2”N, 16°34’39.5”W, 06.08.2025.

HYMENOPTERA

Apidae Leach, 1815

Amegilla canifrons (Smith, 1854) **E** – La Orotava town, Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja, 375 m, 28°23’22.7”N, 16°31’20.3”W, 08.08.2025.
Apis mellifera Linnaeus, 1758 – La Orotava town, Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja, 375 m, 28°23’22.7”N, 16°31’20.3”W, 08.08.2025.

LEPIDOPTERA

Erebidae Leach, 1815

Indalia albicosta (Rogenhofer, 1894) **E** – El Tanque, Ruigómez, dense laurel forest, 822 m, 28°20’32.0”N, 16°47’41.7”W, 05.08.2025.

Lycaenidae Leach, 1815

Cacyreus marshalli Butler, 1897 – Adeje, Costa Adeje, City Park, 10 m, 28°03’19.3”N, 16°43’42.1”W, 05.08.2025; Puerto de la Cruz, Jardín Botánico, 120 m, 28°24’36.7”N, 16°32’04.9”W, 06.08.2025; La Orotava town, Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja, 374 m, 28°23’21.1”N, 16°31’24.3”W, 08.08.2025.
Lampides boeticus (Linnaeus, 1767) – Adeje, Costa Adeje, City Park, 10 m, 28°03’19.3”N, 16°43’42.1”W, 05.08.2025; Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, suburban area, 80 m, 28°24’14.2”N, 16°34’39.5”W, 06.08.2025; Puerto de la Cruz, residential area, 115 m, 28°24’33.2”N, 16°32’18.2”W, 06.08.2025; Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Las Casas la Cumbre (Parque Rural de Anaga), forest edge, 775 m, 28°32’07.0”N, 16°14’07.1”W, 07.08.2025, SZP.
Zizeeria knysna (Trimen, 1862) – Adeje, Costa Adeje, City Park, 10 m, 28°03’19.3”N, 16°43’42.1”W, 05.08.2025; Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 80 m, 28°24’14.2”N, 16°34’39.5”W, 06.08.2025; La Orotava region, El Portillo Viejo, on the flower of Cheirolophus teydis, 2058 m, 28°18’17.3”N, 16°33’58.3”W, 09.08.2025.

Nymphalidae Rafinesque, 1815

Danaus plexippus (Linnaeus, 1758) – Adeje, Costa Adeje, City Park, on the flower of Nerium oleander, 10 m, 28°03’18.8”N, 16°43’41.2”W, 05.08.2025, SZP; Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 94 m, 28°24’10.0”N, 16°34’44.6”W, 04.08.2025, 06.08.2025; Puerto de la Cruz, Jardín Botánico, 120 m, 28°24’36.7”N, 16°32’04.9”W, 06.08.2025; La Orotava town, Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja, 375 m, 28°23’20.6”N, 16°31’23.8”W, 08.08.2025, HNHM.
Pararge aegeria (Linnaeus, 1758) – El Tanque, Ruigómez, 822 m, 28°20’32.6”N, 16°47’34.5”W, 05.08.2025, SZP; Puerto de la Cruz, residential area, 115 m, 28°24’33.2”N, 16°32’18.2”W, 06.08.2025; Tegueste, Cruz de Lucía, near Las Mercedes (Parque Rural de Anaga), 931 m, 28°31’55.3”N, 16°17’35.4”W, 07.08.2025, SZP; Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Las Casas la Cumbre (Parque Rural de Anaga), forest edge, 775 m, 28°32’07.0”N, 16°14’07.1”W, 07.08.2025.

Pieridae Swainson, 1820

Colias croceus (Geoffroy, 1785) – El Tanque, Ruigómez, clearing in laurel forest, 822 m, 28°20’32.6”N, 16°47’34.5”W, 05.08.2025, SZP; Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Las Casas la Cumbre (Parque Rural de Anaga), forest edge, 775 m, 28°32’07.0”N, 16°14’07.1”W, 07.08.2025.
Gonepteryx cleobule (Hübner, 1831) **E** – Tegueste, Cruz del Carmen, near Las Mercedes (Parque Rural de Anaga), forest clearing, 952 m, 28°31’54.5”N, 16°16’51.4”W, 07.08.2025; Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Las Casas la Cumbre (Parque Rural de Anaga), forest edge, on the flower of Chasmanthe floribunda, 775 m, 28°32’07.0”N, 16°14’07.1”W,

07.08.2025.
Pieris rapae (Linnaeus, 1758) – Adeje, Costa Adeje, City Park, 10 m, 28°03’19.3”N, 16°43’42.1”W, 05.08.2025; El Tanque, Ruigómez, clearing in laurel forest, 822 m, 28°20’32.6”N, 16°47’34.5”W, 05.08.2025; Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 80 m, 28°24’14.2”N, 16°34’39.5”W, 06.08.2025; Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Las Casas la Cumbre (Parque Rural de Anaga), forest edge, 775 m, 28°32’07.0”N, 16°14’07.1”W, 07.08.2025; La Orotava town, Jardines del Marquesado de la Quinta Roja, 375 m, 28°23’22.7”N, 16°31’20.3”W, 08.08.2025; La Orotava region, El Portillo Viejo, 2058 m, 28°18’17.3”N, 16°33’58.3”W, 09.08.2025; La Orotava region (Parque Nacional del Teide), southern slope of Teide, 2293 m, 28°15’12.6”N, 16°37’23.7”W, 09.08.2025.

ODONATA

Aeshnidae Rambur, 1842

Anax imperator Leach, 1815 – Puerto de la Cruz, Jardín Botánico, 120 m, 28°24’36.7”N, 16°32’04.9”W, 06.08.2025.

Libellulidae Leach, 1815

Crocothemis erythraea (Brullé, 1832) – Puerto de la Cruz, Jardín Botánico, 120 m, 28°24’36.7”N, 16°32’04.9”W, 06.08.2025.

ORTHOPTERA

Acrididae MacLeay, 1821

Aiolopus thalassinus (Fabricius, 1781) – Puerto de la Cruz, residential area, 107 m, 28°24’36.3”N, 16°32’18.5”W, 06.08.2025, SZP.
Acrotylus insubricus (Scopoli, 1786) – Adeje, Costa Adeje, City Park, 14 m, 28°03’22.6”N, 16°43’37.8”W, 05.08.2025, HNHM; Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 80 m, 28°24’12.6”N, 16°34’41.2”W, 06.08.2025, SZP.
Calliptamus plebeius (Walker, 1870) **E** – La Orotava region, Llano de Ucanca (Parque Nacional del Teide), 2007 m, 28°12’37.8”N, 16°38’40.9”W, 09.08.2025, SZP.
Sphingonotus rubescens (Walker, 1870) – La Orotava region, Llano de Ucanca (Parque Nacional del Teide), 2007 m, 28°12’37.8”N, 16°38’40.9”W, 09.08.2025, SZP.
Sphingonotus willemsei Mistshenko, 1937 **E** – La Orotava region (Parque Nacional del Teide), southern slope of Teide, 2303 m, 28°15’15.4”N, 16°37’20.6”W, 09.08.2025, SZP.

Gryllidae Laicharting, 1781

Gryllodes sigillatus (Walker, 1869) – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 70 m, 28°24’13.5”N, 16°34’41.7”W, 04.08.2025, 06.08.2025.

Oecanthidae Blanchard, 1845

Oecanthus pellucens (Scopoli, 1763) – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 78 m, 28°24’14.5”N, 16°34’38.7”W, 04.08.2025, 06.08.2025.

Tettigoniidae Krauss, 1902

Calliphona koenigi Krauss, 1892 **E** – Los Rechazos, near Puerto de la Cruz, suburban area, 240 m, 28°24’04.6”N, 16°31’11.8”W, 06.08.2025.
Phaneroptera sparsa Stål, 1857 – Los Realejos, Toscal-Longuera, residential area, 78 m, 28°24’14.5”N, 16°34’38.7”W, 04.08.2025.

Summary

Most species were detected in arid coastal areas, and the number of species found exclusively here is also higher. The proportion of endemic species to the Canary Islands of the total number of species recorded in each different habitat is as follows: 14 % in arid coastal areas, 29 % in humid coastal areas, 33 % in laurel forests, and 50 % in the arid semi-desert zone at the slopes of Teide. In total, 31 % of the detected species are endemic. Species that did not occur in only a single habitat type all belong to Lepidoptera. *Colias croceus*, *Gonepteryx cleobule* and *Indalia albicosta* were found exclusively in a single type of habitat: laurel forests at an elevation of 750–950 m. *Cacyreus marshalli* and *Danaus plexippus* occurred under the elevation of 400 m, regardless of whether the environment was arid or humid. Most of the observed species came from the orders Lepidoptera (9) and Orthoptera (9). Occurrences of species in the examined habitats are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Species and their habitats. **1** = arid coastal areas (0–200 m), **2** = humid coastal areas (250–500 m), **3** = laurel forests (750–950 m), **4** = arid semi-desert zone at the slopes of Teide (2000–2300 m). Abbreviation: + = presence of the species in the habitat; grey background = endemic species to the Canary Islands

	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
Acrotylus insubricus	+				*Harmonia axyridis*	+			
Aiolopus thalassinus	+				*Hegeter amaroides*	+			
Amegilla canifrons		+			*Indalia albicosta*			+	
Anax imperator	+				*Lampides boeticus*	+		+	
Apis mellifera		+			*Mesites fusiformis*	+			
Cacyreus marshalli	+	+			*Oecanthus pellucens*	+			
Caenocoris nerii		+			*Pararge aegeria*	+		+	
Calliphona koenigi		+			*Periplaneta americana*	+			
Calliptamus plebeius				+	*Phaneroptera sparsa*	+			
Colias croceus			+		*Pieris rapae*	+	+	+	+
Crocothemis erythraea	+				*Pimelia ascendens*				+
Danaus plexippus	+	+			*Promachus vexator*	+			
Eristalis tenax	+				*Scantius aegyptius*	+			
Gonepteryx cleobule			+		*Sphingonotus rubescens*				+
Gonocephalum prolixum	+				*Sphingonotus willemsei*				+
Gryllodes sigillatus	+				*Zizeeria knysna*	+			+

Acknowledgements: I am grateful to Ádám Kiss (Mátra Museum of the Hungarian National Museum Public Collection Centre – Hungarian Natural History Museum, Gyöngyös, Hungary) for a thorough review of the manuscript. Thanks are due to Győző Szél and Zsolt Bálint (both from Hungarian Natural History Museum of the Hungarian National Museum Public Collection Centre, Budapest, Hungary) for their remarks on the text. I am also grateful to Carlos Ruiz Carriera (University of La Laguna, La Laguna, Spain) for providing information on the public administration process of obtaining permits. Thanks are also due to Kristóf Mislai (Hungarian Natural History Museum of the Hungarian National Museum Public Collection Centre – Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest,

Hungary) for providing additional knowledge on the geographical distribution of the species of Hegeter and Gonocephalum prolixum.

References

Ashmole NP & Ashmole MJ (1988): Insect Dispersal on Tenerife, Canary Islands: High Altitude Fallout and Seaward Drift. – Arctic and Alpine Research, 20(1): 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/00040851.1988.12002646

Bánki O, Roskov Y, Döring M, Ower G, Hernández Robles DR, Plata Corredor CA, Stjernegaard Jeppesen T, Örn A, Pape T, Hobern D, Garnett S, Little H, DeWalt RE, Miller J, Orrell T, Aalbu R, Abbott J, Abreu C, Acero PA & et al. (2026): Catalogue of Life (2026-08-26 XR). – Catalogue of Life Foundation, Amsterdam. https://doi.org/10.48580/dgyy9

Becker T (1908): Dipteren der Kanarischen Inseln. – Mitteilungen aus dem Zoologischen Museum in Berlin, 4(1): 1–180.

Bey-Bienko GY (1954): Прямокрылые. Том II, вып. 2. Подсем. Листовые кузнечики (Phaneropterinae). [Orthoptera. Vol. II. No. 2. Leaf katydids (Phaneropterinae).] – In: Pavlovsky EH (ed.): Фауна СССР. Новая серия 59. [Fauna of the USSR. New series 59.] Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Moscow and Leningrad, 384 pp. (in Russian)

Bey-Bienko GY & Mishchenko LL (1964): Locusts and Grasshoppers of the U.S.S.R. and Adjacent Countries. Part II. – Israel Program for Scientific Translations, Jerusalem, 291 + xxi pp. https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.title.129470

d'Abrera B (2017): Pillangóvilág az északi féltekén és az afrikai földrészen. (World Butterflies: the Northern Hemisphere and the African continent.) – Private edition, Budapest, 129 pp.

De Los Santos A, Ferrer F, De Nicolás JP & Crist TO (2006): Thermal habitat and life history of two congeneric species of darkling beetles (Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae) on Tenerife (Canary Islands). – Journal of Arid Environments, 65(3): 363–385. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaridenv.2005.08.001

Emerson BC & Kolm N (2005): Species diversity can drive specialization. – Nature, 434: 1015–1017. https://doi.org/10.1038/nature03450

Gangwere SK, Morales MM & Morales AE (1972): The distribution of the Orthopteroidea in Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. – Contributions of the American Entomological Institute, 8(1): 1–40.

Hohmann H, La Roche F, Ortega G & Barquin J (1993): Bienen, Wespen und Ameisen der Kanarischen Inseln (Insecta: Hymenoptera: Aculeata) I. – Veröffentlichungen Übersee-Museum Bremen (Naturwissenschaftlichen), Bremen, 492 pp.

Juan C, Oromí P & Hewitt GM (1996): Phylogeny of the genus Hegeter (Tenebrionidae, Coleoptera) and its colonization of the Canary Islands deduced from Cytochrome Oxidase I mitochondrial DNA sequences. – Heredity, 76: 392–403. https://doi.org/10.1038/hdy.1996.57

Machado A & Oromí P (2000): Elenco de los coleópteros de las Islas Canarias. (Catalogue of the coleoptera of the Canary Islands.) – Instituto de Estudios Canarios, La Laguna, 308 pp.

Machado A (2006): El sarantontón asiático Harmonia axyridis (Pallas, 1773) presente en Canarias (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae). – Vieraea. Folia scientarum biologicarum canariensium, 34: 71–72. https://doi.org/10.31939/vieraea.2006.34.10

Macià R, Ylla J, Gastón J, Huertas M & Bau J (2022): The species of Eilema Hübner, [1819] sensu lato present in Europe and North Africa (Lepidoptera: Erebidae: Arctiinae: Lithosiini). – Zootaxa, 5191(1): 1–87. https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5191.1.1

Mistshenko L (1937): New species of the Genus Sphingonotus Fieber (Orth., Acrid.) from the Canary Islands. – Natuurhistorisch Maandblad, 26(4): 40–41.

Moya Ó, Contreras-Díaz HG, Oromí P & Juan C (2006): Using statistical phylogeography to infer population history: Case studies on Pimelia darkling beetles from the Canary Islands. – Journal of Arid Environments, 66(3): 477–497. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaridenv.2006.01.008

Tshikolovets VV (2025): Butterflies of the Western Palaearctic. Vol. I.: Hesperiidae, Papilionidae, Pieridae, Lycaenidae (partim). – Tshikolovets Publications, Pardubice, 352 pp.

Tshikolovets VV (2026): Butterflies of the Western Palaearctic. Vol. II.: Lycaenidae (Agrodiaetus), Riodinidae, Nymphalidae: Libytheinae, Danainae, Charaxinae, Apaturinae, Limenitidinae, Nymphalinae, Heliconiinae, Satyrinae. – Tshikolovets Publications, Pardubice, 368 pp.

Wiemers M (1995a): The butterflies of the Canary Islands. A survey on their distribution, biology and ecology (Lepidoptera: Papilionoidea and Hesperioidea). – Linneana Belgica, 15(2): 63–84.

Wiemers M (1995b): The butterflies of the Canary Islands. A survey on their distribution, biology and ecology (Lepidoptera: Papilionoidea and Hesperioidea) (second part). – Linneana Belgica, 15(3): 87–118.
Wollaston TV (1861): XXV. On the Atlantic Cossonides. – Transactions of the Royal Entomological Society of London, 10: 362–407. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2311.1861.tb02260.x
Wollaston TV (1864): Catalogue of the coleopterous insects of the Canaries in the collection of the British Museum. – British Museum, London, xiii + 648 pp. https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.title.9850

Péter SZECSEI
Szinva utca 5. I/10.
H-1076 Budapest, Hungary
E-mail: szecsei.peti@gmail.com