

ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF *Lethocerus patruelis* (STÅL, 1855) (Heteroptera: Belostomatidae) FOR CROATIA

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Two additional records of *Lethocerus patruelis* (Stål, 1855) (Heteroptera: Belostomatidae) are reported for Southern Dalmatia (Croatia).

***Lethocerus patruelis*, additional records, Southern Dalmatia (Croatia)**

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Dva nova nalaza *Lethocerus patruelis* (Heteroptera: Belostomatidae) zabilježena su za područje južne Dalmacije (Hrvatska).

***Lethocerus patruelis*, novi nalazi, južna Dalmacija (Hrvatska)**

Lethocerus patruelis (Stål, 1855) is a large aquatic bug belonging to the family Belostomatidae. It is the largest European true bug and the largest European water insect. The adult bugs reach 80 mm in length. The range of *L. patruelis* includes the Balkan Peninsula, Anatolia, Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, as well as Pakistan, India, Nepal and Burma (Polhemus, 1995; Perez-Goodwyn, 2006). Recently this species was recorded also from Southern Italy, the range being thus expanded (see Grozeva et al., 2013; Cianferoni & Nardi, 2013).

The Croatian fauna of Heteroptera, and among them especially of aquatic and semi aquatic bugs, has received little attention from specialists, either Croatian or foreign (Kment & Beran, 2011). Recently, an updated check-list of the aquatic and semi-aquatic bugs of Croatia was provided (Kment & Beran, 2011), including a review of the findings of this species in Croatia. The distribution of this species in the Balkan Peninsula has also been presented by Grozeva et al. (2013). In general, it has been known from the southern Balkans (including the coast of Middle and Southern Dalmatia) from the 19th century but there are not many records. Protić (1998) showed that this species was found along the Adriatic coast in Croatia only



Fig. 1. *Lethocerus patruelis* (♀, total length 80 mm) collected at Gršćica Cove (island of Korčula, South Dalmatia, Croatia)

from localities on the island of Pašman in the north to the Prevlaka Peninsula in the south.

One specimen of *L. patruelis* (♀, total length 80 mm, Fig. 1) was collected from a buoy on 5 August 2015 in Gršćica Cove (island of Korčula, Southern Dalmatia, Croatia) (42.903853 N, 16.778557 E). The specimen is deposited in the collection of the Natural History Museum in Split under collection number 97136088.

Shortly after that, Petr Kment had the possibility to identify photograph of a single specimen of *L. patruelis* found dead on the road-side near the village of Trstenik (Pelješac Peninsula, ca. 42.922907 N 17.390706 E) taken by Czech tourists on September 12, 2015.

A special feature of the present finding on Korčula is that the specimen was collected from a buoy, surrounded by sea water, although this species is a freshwater predator (mostly of amphibians and small fish). It seems to be able to survive in sea water, at least temporarily (Schumacher, 1917; Cianferoni & Nardi, 2013). It is also known as excellent flyer. It shows a high positive phototropism and could be attracted by artificial lights (Schumacher, 1917; Cianferoni & Nardi, 2013). Individuals of *L. patruelis* may have been attracted by lights to ports where ships and boats moor and by following their lights could have arrived at new locations (Cianferoni & Nardi, 2013). Cianferoni & Nardi (2013) also hypothesized that this species uses lighted boats as stepping stones to cross a stretch of sea. This species seems to become more common in the last two decades and has also crossed the Adriatic Sea to Southern Italy where it seems to have become established (Cianferoni & Nardi, 2013).

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