

Spiders of the Domica drainage area (Slovak Karst Mts.): community composition and habitat evaluation (Araneae)

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Abstract: In 2003 and 2004 a research of araneofauna and spider communities of the Domica drainage area was performed on 27 study sites (on 12 of them by pitfall trapping). Altogether, more than 2,712 specimens belonging to 198 species were captured. The species diversity in the Domica drainage area is rather high, representing approximately 23% of the Slovak araneofauna. Of the identified species, 15 are listed in the Red List of Spiders of Slovakia. The occurrences of *Centromerus capucinus* (EN), *Diaea livens* (CR), *Hahnina picta* (EN) and *Sintula spiniger* (EN) are of great importance since these species had been reported in Slovakia only a few times before. The great richness of the spider fauna and the occurrence of rare and threatened species for Slovakia confirm the high biotic value of the investigated areas. Ten study sites (sites 1-10) investigated by means of pitfall traps for a period of one year were assessed according to their biological importance based on the occurrence of endangered and rare spider species. Three of the study sites, such as dry calcareous pasture in lime sink (site 6), dry calcareous grassland in the karren area of the National Nature Reserve Domicke Škrapy (Domica Karren) (site 3) and an old extensively used orchard near Kečovo (site 7) have been assigned to the biologically most valuable areas (territories with the highest proportion of endangered and rare species).

Key words: spiders, nature conservation, Domica, karst, southeastern Slovakia