

A review of spiders on tree trunks in Europe (Araneae)

*Csaba Szinetár*¹, *Roland Horváth*²

Abstract: The present paper provides an overview of the European publications concerning bark-dwelling spiders. A total of 29 works have been investigated during the work: articles, M.Sc. theses and books. Collections on which the publications were based upon, demonstrated the presence of a total of 298 spiders on the bark of different tree species. This high species number can be attributed mostly to the species occurring randomly on the tree bark; however, it can unanimously be stated that there are facultative and exclusive bark-dwelling spider species as well. Among the species occurring randomly, a high proportion is constituted by the ground-dwelling linyphiid spiders of small body, which make up a large proportion in the species number, however, their abundance is low. Different authors used different sampling methods and efforts. In spite of this, several conclusions could be drawn concerning the bark-dwelling spider assemblages: i) within the total population in tree bark, the widespread bark-dwelling species were dominant, regardless of tree species and location; ii) in the case of a single tree species, significant differences may be present within a smaller region – even within a town – in the species composition of spider assemblages; iii) the altitude plays an important role in the formation of the bark-dwelling spider assemblages within a given area; iv) the occurrence frequency is characteristically changing with the geographical latitude; v) the composition of the bark-dwelling spider assemblages is seasonally changing even within a single tree species. A significant difference is shown between the summer and winter assemblages.

Key words: bark-dwelling spiders, coniferous trees, deciduous trees, urban habitats, seasonality