

# First Record of *Geomantis larvoides* Pantel, 1896 (Mantidae) from Albania with an updated checklist of Albanian Mantodea

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**Abstract:** One mantid species, *Geomantis larvoides* (Mantodea: Mantidae), was recorded for the first time from the area of Albania. The new finding increases the number of Mantodea species known from Albania to six. An updated checklist of the Albanian mantids is provided.

**Key words:** Mantodea, *Geomantis*, new record, Albania, Balkan Peninsula, checklist

## Introduction

There are only a few papers concerning the fauna of the Albanian mantids, which usually provide single records on these insects. Moreover, the suborder Mantodea has never been a subject of regular studies in Albania. Most recently, AGABITI *et al.* (2010), BATTISTON *et al.* (2010), and HELLER, BOHN (2012) summarised the diversity of Mantodea in the country providing records on five species belonging to this group, with no record of *Geomantis larvoides*.

The aim of this paper is to provide the first exact data on the occurrence of *Geomantis larvoides* within the territory of Albania as well as to present an updated checklist of Mantodea found in this country. The current work is the sixth part of the studies that are focused on the Albanian insects collected during scientific expeditions to Albania, which were organized by the Department of Invertebrate Zoology and Hydrobiology, University of Łódź (JASKUŁA 2007, PRZEWOŹNY *et al.* 2008, 2010, DEVETAK *et al.* 2012, JASKUŁA *et al.* 2012).

## Material and Methods

All mantids were collected using entomological hand nets or by hand catching during three expeditions: "Amphi-Balkan Expedition II" in 2006, "TB-Quest Expedition V" in 2010, and "TB-Quest Expedition VII" in 2011. The material was deposited in the author's collection (Fig. 1, 2).

## Results

### Mantodea BURMEISTER, 1838

Mantidae Burmeister, 1838

*Geomantis larvoides* Pantel, 1896

**Material examined:** Albania, District of Särände, Butrint village, olive grove, N39°59.181', E19°55.072', 07.09.2006, 1♀ with co-occurrence of *Ameles decolor* (Charpentier, 1825), R. Jaskuła leg., 1♀ 3♂♂ with co-occurrence of *Ameles decolor* (Charpentier, 1825) and *Mantis religiosa* (LINNAEUS, 1758), 28.08.2010, R. Jaskuła, P. Józwiak et B. Ukleja leg., 2♀♀ 4♂♂ with co-occurrence of *Ameles decolor* (Charpentier, 1825) 18.08.2011, R. Jaskuła, I. Jaroszevska et B. Pawicki leg.

**General distribution:** Albania, Croatia, Greece, France, Italy (including Sardinia and Sicily), Portugal, Spain, also in North Africa and the Near East.

As a result of the present study, the current checklist of Albanian Mantodea is as follows:

Family: Empusidae Burmeister, 1838

*Empusa fasciata* Brullé, 1832

Family: Mantidae Burmeister, 1838

*Ameles decolor* (Charpentier, 1825)

*Ameles spallanzania* (Rossi, 1792)

*Geomantis larvoides* Pantel, 1896

*Iris oratoria* (Linnaeus, 1758)

*Mantis religiosa* (Linnaeus, 1758)

## Discussion

The occurrence of *Geomantis larvoides* in Albania is reported for the first time. The new finding increases the species richness of the Albanian Mantodea to six species that constitute 67% of the Balkan species belonging to this suborder. Taking into account the fauna of the other countries on the Balkan Peninsula, especially those that border on Albania, three more mantid species might be found in the country in the future. For example, *Rivetina balcanica* Kaltenbach, 1963 and *Ameles heldrechi* Brunner von Wattenwyl, 1882, are known from Greece and Montenegro (US, MATVEJEV 1967, BATTISTON *et al.* 2010, HELLER, BOHN 2012). Findings of *Empusa pennata*, a typical West Mediterranean species that is actually known on the Balkan Peninsula only from its most western part (Croatia: Dalmatia; US, MATVEJEV 1967), are less possible in the territory of Albania.



Fig. 1. *Geomantis larvoides*

All the data presented in this study were obtained from a single locality situated in the southwestern part of the country. As *Geomantis larvoides* is not rare on the Balkan Peninsula, being even common in some regions, it can be expected that future studies should find much more localities of this insect in Albania. Moreover, the habitat type (olive grove with maquis shrubland as surroundings) that was occupied by the mentioned insect in Butrint village is common not only in the District of Särände, but also in many other regions of the country.

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Fig. 2. Habitat of *Geomantis larvoides* in olive grove in Butrint village

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