

On the presence of *Orussus abietinus* (Scopoli, 1763) (Hymenoptera, Orussidae) in Sicily

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RIASSUNTO

Sulla presenza di Orussus abietinus (Scopoli, 1763) (Hymenoptera, Orussidae) in Sicilia

Viene confermata la presenza in Sicilia (Monti Nebrodi: Messina, Cesarò, Portella Sella Maria, m 1474 s.l.m.) di *Orussus abietinus* (Scopoli, 1763) nota soltanto attraverso antiche e vaghe segnalazioni dell'Ottocento non confermate e un dato informale presente in un forum entomologico.

Parole chiave: Hymenoptera, Orussidae, Sicilia, Monti Nebrodi.

ABSTRACT

It is confirmed the presence in Sicily (Nebrodi Mountains: Messina province, Cesarò, Portella Sella Maria, m 1474 a.s.l.) of *Orussus abietinus* (Scopoli, 1763), previously known on the basis of old and vague not confirmed records in the nineteenth century and one informal record in an entomological forum.

Key words: Hymenoptera, Orussidae, Sicily, Nebrodi Mountains.

The Orussidae is a small family of parasitoid wasps containing about 90 extant species worldwide, associated with wood-boring insect larvae, usually beetles (predominantly Buprestidae and Cerambycidae) (VILHELMSSEN, 2003, 2004; VILHELMSSEN *et al.*, 2017). The family includes nine species in Europe (KRAUS, 1998; TAEGER *et al.*, 2018), six in Italy (PESARINI, 1995; TOMARCHIO & TURRISI, 2002; PESARINI & TURRISI, 2006), and four in Sicily (BELLA & TURRISI, 1998; TOMARCHIO & TURRISI, 2002; TURRISI, 2011; LISTON *et al.*, 2013).

Orussus abietinus (Scopoli, 1763) (Figs 1-3)

Material examined. 1♂, Italy: Sicily, Messina province, Cesarò, Portella Sella Maria, m 1474 a.s.l., 37°53'48.43"N 14°38'24.46"E, 23.v.2021, G.F. Turrisi leg. (Turrisi G.F. Collection, University of Catania).

Remarks. This species has a transpalearctic distribution, from Western Europe to the northern Far East (VILHELMSSEN *et al.*, 2017). There is a similar (cryptic) species in North Africa (Algeria, Tunisia), namely *Orussus smithi* Blank, Kraus, Taeger, 2006, where also *O. abietinus* occurs. However, *O. abietinus* and *O. smithi* can be readily distinguished by the shape of the white markings on the frons, narrow linear bands extending along the median margin of the eye in the former species (Fig. 3), irregular spots ventral to eye in the latter (BLANK *et al.*, 2006; VILHELMSSEN *et al.*, 2017). *Orussus abietinus* is known from Sicily since long time based on the old records by GHILIANI (1842) and SICHEL (1860), although with only vague indications and without the support of collection material. Subsequently, the species was recorded by DE STEFANI PEREZ

(1895) in his catalogue of Sicilian Hymenoptera, apparently based on previous older records. Other records by GUIGLIA (1946, 1954), added no precise data of locality from Sicily. The most recent papers dealing with Sicilian sawflies only resume previous old data without adding new information (BELLA & TURRISI, 1998; PESARINI & TURRISI, 2001; TURRISI, 2011; LISTON *et al.*, 2013). Thus, taking into account the published data, there are no precise data of locality for Sicily nor material available for checking. The only precise reference is contained in the so called "grey literature", with a female photographed from Messina province, Nebrodi Mountains, contrada Medda, m 1200 a.s.l., M. Romano leg. (Forum Entomologi Italiani, <http://www.entomologiitaliani.net/public/forum/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=370&t=26485&chilit=abietinus>). In Italy, this species has a wide distribution covering the peninsular area, Sicily and Sardinia (KRAUS, 1998; BLANK *et al.*, 2006; CILLO *et al.*, 2019), although the number of known specimens is low. The species has recently been recorded as new to Sardinia (CILLO *et al.*, 2019), but it is however previously known for the island according to KRAUS (1998: Fig. 16) and BLANK *et al.* (2006: Fig. 14).

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Figs. 1-3. *Orussus abietinus* (Scopoli, 1763) male of Nebrodi Mountains. 1, Habitus, dorsal view. 2, Head, dorsal view. 3, Head frontal view.

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