

A short note on additional records of fruitfly (Diptera, Drosophilidae) from Malta

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The fruitflies of the family Drosophilidae that occur in the Maltese Islands were studied by EBEJER (2001). Thirteen species were recorded including the common species *Zaprionus tuberculatus* Malloch, 1932, which is predominantly associated with fallen and decaying citrus fruits. Subsequently, two records appeared in the literature. One paper (YASSIN & DAVID, 2010) listed *Zaprionus tuberculatus* Malloch, 1932 as present on Malta, but Ebejer's earlier work was not referred to and the other (AL T'OMA & VAN DER LINDE, 2010) listed *Z. indianus* Gupta, 1970 as present on Malta. The sources of these records are unclear and the Fauna Europaea database (BÄCHLI, 2003) only lists *Z. tuberculatus* as present on Malta. Therefore, some doubt remained as to whether or not *Z. indianus* is really found on Malta.

In December 2014, Dr David Mifsud forwarded a sample of fruitflies for identification. These were collected from a mass of decaying organic matter (roof-top compost bin of domestic kitchen waste) in Zejtun, 25.x.2014. The sample consisted of the following species: *Drosophila busckii* (Cocquillet, 1901), 8 ♂♂ & 4 ♀♀; *D. buzzatii* Patterson & Wheeler 1942, 9 ♂♂ & 8 ♀♀; *D. hydei* Sturtevant 1921, 5 ♂♂ & 3 ♀♀; *D. simulans* (Sturtevant, 1919), 1 ♂; *Scaptomyza pallida* (Zetterstedt, 1847), 1 ♀; and *Zaprionus indianus*, 1 ♀. Therefore, it can now be confirmed that *Z. indianus* does occur on Malta alongside the far more common *Z. tuberculatus*. Both species have become widespread in the Mediterranean and continue to expand their geographical range as well as the range of fruits and organic matter in which they develop. *Zaprionus indianus* appears to favour figs over citrus. Species of *Zaprionus*, though striking, appear remarkably similar to non-taxonomists.

In a sample of Diptera collected on Comino from 28 to 30 March, 2002, the author found a single female of *Scaptomyza flava* (Fallén, 1823). This is a new record for Malta. The species is widespread in the Palaearctic region from the Macaronesian Islands to Mongolia. It is also recorded from North America. In conclusion, the total number of Drosophilidae currently known from Malta stands at 15.

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