

Checklist and taxonomic updates in grasshoppers (Orthoptera: Caelifera) of central and southwestern Tunisia with new records and a key for species identification
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Abstract

Since the publication of Chopard's 1943 book, *Les Orthoptéroïdes d'Afrique du Nord*, the diversity of Orthoptera in Tunisia has not been studied or prospected except for 20 publications. Furthermore, the classification of Orthoptera has changed since 1943 due to taxonomic and phylogenetic advances. To allow a full survey of the Tunisian grasshopper fauna, it is thus necessary first to correctly survey the biological diversity of grasshoppers in Tunisia, and second to have an updated taxonomic reference in order to describe this diversity and compare it with the grasshopper faunas in the other countries of the Maghreb. In the present paper, we propose an updated checklist and a key for the identification of Tunisian grasshoppers, based primarily on field sampling in central and southwestern Tunisia, and literature data for other Tunisian areas. Each species is documented with habitus photographs, geographical distribution, and type of habitat. In total, for the prospected areas, 75 species of Caelifera belonging to five families and 43 genera are listed, while 83 species were recorded up to now for the whole Tunisia. Among these 75 species, seven are newly recorded for Tunisia, i.e., *Sphodromerus decoloratus* Finot, 1894, *Egnatioides coeruleans* (Krauss, 1893), *Dociostaurus biskrensis* Moussi & Petit, 2014, *Aiolopus puissantii* Defaut, 2005, *Hilethera aeolopoides* (Uvarov, 1922), *Leptopternis rothschildi* Bolívar, 1913, and *Tenuitarsus angustus* (Blanchard, 1836); and one species is newly recorded for central and southwestern Tunisia, i.e., *Oedipoda fuscocincta fuscocincta* Lucas, 1849. We also confirm the presence of two species that were only tentatively recorded in Tunisia, i.e., *Oedaleus senegalensis* (Krauss, 1877) and *Stenohippus mundus* (Walker, 1871). DNA sequences (COI, ND2 and H3) are presented for 26 taxa, as a first step towards barcoding all Tunisian caeliferan taxa.