

## BOOK REVIEWS

## CATALOGUE COMMENTÉ DES CRUSTACÉS ISOPODES TERRESTRES DE FRANCE MÉTROPOLITAINE (CRUSTACEA, ISOPODA, ONISCIDEA)

## [ANNOTATED CATALOGUE OF THE TERRESTRIAL ISOPOD CRUSTACEANS OF METROPOLITAN FRANCE (CRUSTACEA, ISOPODA, ONISCIDEA)]

By Emmanuel Séchet &amp; Franck Noël; 2015

Mémoires de la Société Linnéenne de Bordeaux, Tome 16 – 2015.

ISSN 1272 6184

In French with abstract in English. A4, soft cover, 156 pages, 30 colour photographs of species.

This is a taxonomic catalogue of the woodlice of mainland France, its coastal islands and Corsica, covering 218 species plus 81 subspecies. The woodlice fauna of France is more than four times greater than that of Britain and Ireland (even including our ‘alien’ species), but some 45% of the French species are regarded as being endemic.

The volume is essentially a review and does not provide keys or other guides to identification. Sources for identification are included by reference to the bibliography, such as Vandel’s two *Faune de France* volumes published in the 1960s, and other original descriptions and revisions. Although Vandel’s *Faune de France* could be regarded as the starting point for their catalogue, the bibliography is impressive – over 300 titles (of which 10% of titles are by Vandel). For a selection of species, mainly French endemics, the location of type material is also listed, including many museum collections outside France.

The volume updates nomenclature to specific and sub-specific levels with an excellent index including synonyms. Subspecies are covered (under the nominate species) in as much detail as some species, under a range of headings. The levels of detail regarding each taxon are pragmatically variable. For common species usually no more than:

*Biblio*: reference to the relevant pages of Vandel’s *Faune de France*, or other identification sources,

*Aire*: world distribution,

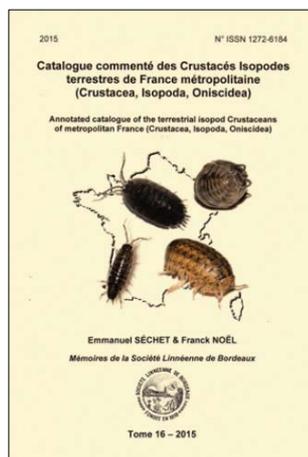
*Distr*: summary of distribution in France (with source references),

*Ecol*: biotopes with which the taxon is normally associated,

*Comm*: comments which may include additional sources of identification.

Recognised synonymies are listed with references and for species for which there have been perceived difficulties with identity and nomenclature, the authors’ up-to-date interpretation is given with relevant references.

Work by Dalens and his collaborators, mainly in southern France, and in Corsica by Taiti & Ferrara, has brought forward new species and subspecies in several genera to which the authors have added their own revisions, including new combinations. For example, the catalogue includes 25 species of *Oritoniscus*, with some Vandel species now reduced to subspecies and several species brought forward



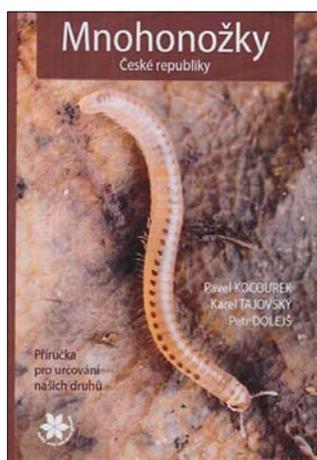
by Dalens, Legrand and Taiti and Ferrara since Vandel. The individual accounts for such species and subspecies demonstrates the value of the flexible approach to what information is likely to be useful in such a catalogue.

For anyone interested in woodlice in France, this catalogue is essential. It brings together much existing but widely dispersed information as a coherent and readily understood summary. Most of the titles cited in the bibliography were published in journals or series that will be accessible only through specialist libraries. For example, anyone wishing to check-out the authors' 2007 paper on the woodlice of North-West France would need to search out the serial *Invertébrés Armoricains*. This catalogue has much to recommend it and a copy has been purchased by BMIG and added to our section of the British Entomological and Natural History Society's library at Dinton Pastures.

Paul T Harding

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## MNOHONOŽKY ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY (MILLIPEDES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC)



By Pavel Kocourek, Karel Tajovský and Petr Dolejs; 2017

ISBN: 978 80 87964 09 5

Available from <http://csopvlasim.cz/eshop/>

293 CZK (11 Euros)

This paperback, in full colour, is in Czech with an abstract in English. Despite the language this book is likely to be of interest to those in the UK working on millipedes because of the plentiful illustrations, colour plates and accessible layout.

The first section, consisting of introduction, morphology, ecology, methods of study and fossil groups is perhaps the least useful for an English readership but the taxonomic list is interesting because it includes many British species, but also many more as well. The key to species is potentially useful in separating pairs of similar species using diagrams and there is a useful table, including illustrations, showing features of the different orders.

The main bulk of the book consists of a double page spread for each species, including a photograph (some live, others preserved specimens), an illustration of the whole animal (sometimes both male and female), an illustration of the gonopods or other key feature to help determine the species such as telson shape, illustrations of variation in colour pattern (as appropriate), a distribution map covering the Czech Republic, a list of synonyms and some explanatory text. One interesting feature is the inclusion of status, thus highlighting species that are of conservation concern.

The species accounts are interspersed with various additional illustrations such as SEM photographs and pictures of habitats. At the end there are sections on bioindicators, further reading and an index and glossary.

The book is of use to British workers as it covers quite a few British species and could be useful for additional species that may turn up in the future. One minor criticism is that some of the plates are a bit vivid in colour but it is nice to see attractive depictions of our species which are normally portrayed as dull and boring! The guide is very comprehensive in including illustrations of gonopods etc. It is

interesting to see the conservation status of species in the Czech Republic such as *Tachypodoiulus niger* as near threatened and *Melagona gallica* as critical putting in context the British fauna. It is also interesting to note how many more Chordeumatid species there are in the Czech Republic than the UK. It is a nice touch to include photographs of typical habitats which could be useful, for example the gardens of a rather grand looking stately home for *Cylindroiulus caeruleocinctus*! The book includes species only found in the Czech Republic in glasshouses.

This guide provides useful information on pairs of similar species for which we have one in the UK but should be vigilant in case of other similar species turning up. It is also interesting to note the consequences of a more continental climate than the UK, and some differences in the fauna, for example the presence of five species of *Glomeris*, but not *marginata*, and two species of *Trachysphaera*, but not *lobata*.

The book is a handy size and being soft backed keeps the price low. There was a similar sized book (Lang 1954), in black and white, published over 60 years ago now and to which I have referred frequently over the years so it is lovely to have a modern version.

In summary, an attractive book that is well worth buying as a British worker, giving an insight into both the species found in Czech Republic and the work that is being carried out there as well as being of help for those of us working on these animals in the UK. The authors are to be congratulated on an attractive book that will hopefully stimulate additional people to take an interest.

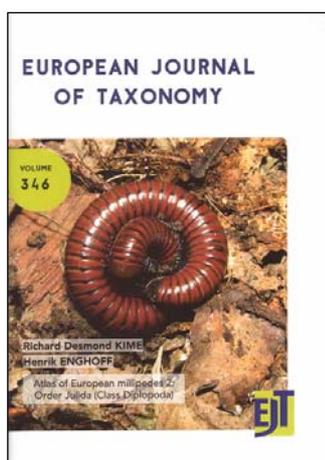
## References

Lang, J. (1954). Fauna ČSR. Mnohonožky. Československa Akademie Věd. Praha. 183pp.

Helen Read



## ATLAS OF EUROPEAN MILLIPEDES 2: ORDER JULIDA (CLASS DIPLOPODA)



By Richard Desmond Kime and Henrik Enghoff.

European Journal of Taxonomy. Volume 346: 299pp.

I was delighted to receive a copy of the long awaited second volume in the atlas of European millipedes. This herculean project has been spear headed by Desmond Kime and Henrik Enghoff with the first volume on various orders including the Polydesmida published in 2011 by Pensoft. Only a limited number of printed copies of the second volume have been printed but it is available for free download from

<http://www.europeanjournaloftaxonomy.eu/index.php/ejt/article/view/471>.

The volume starts with a short introduction to millipedes and millipede recording and some information to help with the interpretation of the maps and the rest of the atlas and then gives a complete species list. Each species is then considered separately with a list of synonyms and the distribution given by country, with some regions within countries mentioned if appropriate. There are then sections on habitat and 'remarks' which vary in length and detail according to what is known about the individual species. There then follows an extensive reference list and then the last third of the volume consists of the maps with species

mapped at the 50km square definition. The maps vary in size and geographical extent depending on the distribution of the species that they represent. For some closely related species, like those found on the Canary Islands or Madeira, one map may be used to show the extent of several species. A map is provided showing all the 50km square from which provided records and there are some interesting 'white' spaces – a fair bit of the Iberian peninsula but also a few squares in France and a small number in Italy, all of which may be worth a look if people are on holiday in these regions – plus large expanses of northern Scandinavia which might be rather less productive...! The maps extend eastwards into European Russia although the 'dots' thin out considerably.

It is fascinating looking through at some of the British species to see their full European extent. I also had fun looking up some species we have found on BMIG field trips abroad, for example to Galicia and Hungary. To pick a few at random, *Cylindroiulus britannicus* shows a wide European range with scattered localities from the Canary Islands right through to Russia, but the UK really does appear a stronghold. Several British species show strong coverage in the UK relative to other places in Europe – but of course the recording in the UK is probably more extensive than most other European countries so how much this reflects recording effort is difficult to say. *Ommatoiulus sabulosus* has a distribution that is pretty widespread but does not appear to extend south of the Pyrenees, watch out for *Ommatoiulus rutilans* however, a very similar although more restricted distribution to *O. sabulosus* but not yet in the UK. *Ophiulus pilosus* is also quite interesting, it is widespread in the UK but the only French records appear to be a few on the north coast and the bulk of the range is further east, in Germany, northern Italy, Denmark and Austria. The cut-off date for inclusion of records was the end of 2014 so some recent finds from the UK have not made it into the volume but it is interesting to see their previous known ranges mapped. *Cylindroiulus pyrenaicus* very much restricted to the Pyrenees, *C. apenninorum*, confined to Italy and a couple of outliers in the Netherlands and Belgium, *Ommatoiulus moreleti* on some Atlantic Islands and the Iberian peninsula.

I have a few minor quibbles. First the blue colour used for the dots on the maps is sometimes quite difficult to see, so that if a species has been found from a single 50km square it can be difficult to locate this on the map, especially if this is on a small island or a bit of coast, which can lead to playing 'hunt the dot'. Secondly, species that have the same distribution and are thus illustrated on the same map are listed in the 'correct' place alphabetically in the map section with a cross reference to the page with the written information on but not the page where the 'communal' distribution map is located.

These do not however detract from what is a remarkable piece of work which will be incredibly useful for anyone interested in European Julids. In the light of the numbers of new species turning up in the UK in recent years the information presented here may well become more relevant in the future. The authors are to be congratulated on their hard work and also for securing publication in a format where it is available to all – something much appreciated by those that are in effect amateurs. It is thoroughly recommended to British workers.

Volume 3 will cover the large order Chordeumatida but I believe it is not especially close to being completed.

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