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NOTATKI FAUNISTYCZNE

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BATOZONELLUS LACERTICIDA (PALLAS, 1771) (HYMENOPTERA: POMPILIDAE) – A NEW RECORD IN THE MASURIAN LAKE DISTRICT

On 13 August 2021 a female *Batozonellus lacerticida* (Photo) was documented during faunistic research conducted at the southern end of the Masurian Plain mesoregion (Borki forestry, Wielbark Forest District; EE01 UTM square). This insect was found when moving freshly hunted prey – a paralysed female wasp spider *Argiope bruennichi*. This observation was made on the clearing after the high-voltage power line dismantled in 2017, crossing a 60-year-old pine stand growing on the habitat of a low quality fresh coniferous forest. The site where we spotted the wasp was a small, open sandy area overgrown with the tussocks of the grey hair-grass *Corynephorus canescens* and patches of lichen of the genus *Cladonia*. The self-sown Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, black cherry *Padus serotina*, and single clumps of the common heather *Calluna vulgaris* were growing on the outskirts.

The spider wasp *Batozonellus lacerticida* is a very rare species in Poland listed on the Red List of Vulnerable and Endangered Animals in Poland (Wiśniowski 2002) and in the Polish Red Book of Animals as a critically endangered species (=CR) (Wiśniowski 2004). In the latest study on the Polish spider wasps, the threat category was lowered to EN, i.e., a species that is very likely to become extinct shortly (Wiśniowski 2009). The basis for this new assessment were several documented, yet unpublished records of this species (Wiśniowski 2009). This wasp was recorded in several zoogeographical regions in Poland, from the Baltic Coast and Pomerania to Upper Silesia, Sandomierz Lowland, and Roztocze, with most of these observations reported before 1950 (Wiśniowski 2009). When analysing the summary presenting the knowledge of this species until 2009, it should be pointed out that the last record in the 50s of the XX century was in Małopolska Upland in 1956 (Wiśniowski 2009).

In 1957-1977 this spider wasp was not recorded in Poland. The observation of the spider wasp in Susiec in Roztocze on 31 July 1978 (Kowalczyk 1988,

Wiśniowski 2009) interrupted the lack of information on this species over those 20 years. Then again, more than 20 years passed, and in 1999 a female was observed in Tomaszów Mazowiecki (Wiśniowski 2009). In the current century, this insect was found in Sandomierz Lowland, where four observations were reported in 2003-2008, and five individuals were recorded in total (Wiśniowski 2009). The second area of the species occurrence is Podlasie, where a male and a female were caught in the "Jelonka" reserve (Kleszczele municipality) on 13 and 21 July 2015 (Twerd 2015).

Photo. *Batozonellus lacerticida* ♀, 13 August 2021 r., EE01 UTM (Photo M. Szymkiewicz)

Fot. Nastecznik żółtoskrzydły *Batozonellus lacerticida* ♀, 13 VIII 2021 r., UTM EE01 (fot. M. Szymkiewicz)

The spider wasp *Batozonellus lacerticida* has so far been reported twice in the Masurian Lake District: on 8 July 1948, two females were caught in, at that time, the Ruda Forest District (nowadays this is an area of the Górznieńsko-Lidzbarski Landscape Park), and in August 1952 two females and a male were collected by J. Fudakowski in Rybaki by Łańskie Lake near Olsztyn (Wiśniowski 2009). Our

present observation from the Wielbark Forest District is the third finding of this Hymenoptera in the Masurian Lake District and the first after a 69-year break.

Among 85 species of spider wasps that occur in Poland (Skibińska 2004), *Batozonellus lacerticida* is the largest representative of this family in Central Europe. The body length of females is up to 22 mm, and of males up to 17 mm (Wiśniowski 2009, Bellmann 2011). This species is easily recognizable not only because of its large body size but also because of its very attractive colouration. *Batozonellus lacerticida* inhabits vast areas of the Palearctic (except its northern regions), from Portugal to Japan. The northern limit of the distribution range of this Hymenoptera runs through Poland (Wiśniowski 2004). This species is not protected.

Females of *Batozonellus lacerticida* are specialized predators hunting our largest spiders of the family *Araneidae*, including wasp spiders. Hunted but alive, paralyzed spiders are the food of the larvae. Adult individuals are melitophages feeding on nectar and pollen of flowers; they prefer species of the celery family *Apiaceae*, like the common hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, *Peucedanum oreoselinum*, and among other plant species – thyme *Thymus spp.*, raspberries and blackberries *Rubus spp*.

This spider wasp inhabits sunny areas, most often sandy, overgrown with loose vegetation, inhabited by the rich fauna of large spiders (Wiśniowski 2004). Adult wasps are observed from a mid-June to early September, and the peak of their occurrence in Poland falls on the second and third decade of July (Wiśniowski 2009).

Such habitats as the one in which *Batozonellus lacerticida* was recorded in the Wielbark Forest District are numerous in the Masurian Lake District, particularly in its central and southern parts. Similar habitats are in the northern part of the Mazovian Lowland (Kurpiowska Plain) or some regions of Podlasie. Also, one of its prey – the wasp spider is a widespread and numerous species, and in some places even numerous, at least in the Masurian Lake District, and for this reason, *Batozonellus lacerticida* should be more often recorded. Perhaps the reason for the lack of information on this wasp is the shortage of field studies, which is a consequence of a small number of people interested in Hymenoptera.

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NASTECZNIK ŻÓŁTOSKRZYDŁY *BATOZONELLUS LACERTICIDA* (PALLAS, 1771) (HYMENOPTERA: POMPILIDAE) – NOWE STANOWISKO NA POJEZIERZU MAZURSKIM

Streszczenie

Na terenie leśnictwa Borki (Nadleśnictwo Wielbark) w pobliżu wsi Lejkowo (kwadrat UTM EE 01) 13 VIII 2021 r. wykryto samicę nastecznika żółtoskrzydłego *Batozonellus lacerticida* (Pallas, 1771) (fot.). Jest to trzecie stwierdzenie tego gatunku na Pojezierzu Mazurskim i pierwsze po 69-letniej przerwie.

Słowa kluczowe: nastecznik żółtoskrzydły *Batozonellus lacerticida*, błonkówki, Pojezierze Mazurskie, nowe stanowisko.

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