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## Millipedes of Cyprus (Myriapoda: Diplopoda)

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### Abstract

The paper presents an annotated catalogue of the millipedes (Diplopoda) of Cyprus, based on literature scrutiny and on hitherto unpublished material. A total of 21 species belonging to 14 genera, 9 families and 7 orders are recorded from the island. Three species are regarded as new to science, but are not formally described, and the status of another three is yet to be clarified. *Pachyiulus cyprius* Brölemann, 1896 and *Strongylosoma (Tetrarthrosoma) cyprium* Verhoeff, 1902 are established as junior subjective synonyms of *Amblyiulus barroisi* (Porat, 1893) and *T. syriacum* (Humbert & DeSaussure, 1869), respectively, both **syn. nov.** The present-day diversity of the Cypriot millipede fauna is analysed in the light of past geological events. It is presumed that the fauna originated from the late Miocene, when Cyprus was formed as a result of uplift of the sea floor. During the Messinian salinity crisis, some 6–5.3 mya, land bridges existed between the island and the neighbouring Taurus Mts. (Turkey) and the region of Latakia (Syria), which are supposed to have served as migratory pathways for various millipede taxa.

**Key words:** new species, new synonyms, catalogue, distribution, Levant, Asia Minor

### Introduction

Cyprus, with a territory of 9250 km<sup>2</sup>, is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea following Sicily and Sardinia. The southern and western parts of the island are taken up by the Troodos Mountains, with Mount Olympos (1952 m a.s.l.) being the highest peak. The Mesaoria Plain spreads out in the central part of the island, and is bordered by the Kyrenia Range to the north-northeast (see e.g., Pavliček & Csuzdi, 2006).

Up to now, the millipede fauna of Cyprus has not been the subject of a detailed study. Scattered taxonomic and faunistic data can be found in the works of Brölemann (1896), Attems (1902), Verhoeff (1902), Turk (1952), Strasser (1967, 1979), Thaler (1987, 2000), Enghoff (1995) and Golovatch *et al.* (2004). So far a total of 12 species have been reported from Cyprus. Given the size of Cyprus, its landscape diversity and unique geographical position between the Aegean, Asia Minor and the Levant, this number certainly fails to demonstrate the real species richness.

Having examined a large collection of hitherto unstudied material, we report several millipede species as new to Cyprus. We also increase the number of records of species that were already encountered on the island. Several other, yet undescribed species have been discovered in the course of our research and await formal description in forthcoming papers.

Apart from the main goal of preparing a detailed catalogue of the millipedes of Cyprus, the present paper also

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