First record of *Fredericella sultana* (Blumenbach, 1779) (Bryozoa, Phylactolaemata) in Crete (Greece)

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Abstract. The occurrence of colonies of *Fredericella sultana* (Blumenbach, 1779) (Bryozoa, Phylactolaemata) is reported from Lake Kourna and the Agia Reservoir in Crete (Greece).

Key words. Bryozoa, Phylactolaemata, *Fredericella sultana*, Crete, Greece, Lake Kourna, Agia Reservoir, first record.

Localities

During a holiday stay in Crete in 2005 (Massard & Geimer 2006) we had a look at Lake Kourna (Límni Kourná, 35°20'N 24°16'E), the only natural freshwater lake of the island, where we found numerous colonies of *Fredericella sultana* (with typical smooth sessoblasts) on stones and on branches lying in the water (Aug. 17, 2005). Additionally, some colonies of *F. sultana* were collected from the artificial lake (reservoir) of Agia (Límni Agiá, 35°29'N 23°56'E) connected to the Keritis river system (Aug. 20, 2005).

Discussion

In the bryozoological literature the Greek islands and continental Greece are still "terra incognita" as far as freshwater bryozoans are concerned (Massard & Geimer 2005). Of course, there can be no doubt that at least the common species of these animals do occur in Greece, and the record of *Fredericella sultana* in Crete provides the first evidence of this assumption.

Both Cretan lakes are resting areas for migratory birds and are well known by ornithologists for their rich avifauna (Lange & Wächter 1999, Georgioupolis Internet Station 2007). Lake Kourna and the neighbouring Almiros Delta and Georgioupolis Coast constitute one of the "Important Bird Areas of Greece", although Lake Kourna is rather touristic (Hellenic Ornithological Society 2007). According to Birdforum.net (2004) the Agia Reservoir is "undoubtedly the best wetland on Crete" from a birding point of view. "The large areas of open water, extensive reedbeds and surrounding scrubland attract many species of interest during the breeding season and on passage".

It is not excluded that the occurrence of *Fredericella sultana* (whose sessoblasts can survive in the guts of waterfowl) may be linked to this rich avifauna, and especially to the migratory species.

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