

Short communication

First record of *Neostrachia bisignata* (Walker, 1867) (Hemiptera: Pentatomidae: Menidini) in Italy

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Abstract. The first record of *Neostrachia bisignata* (Walker, 1867) (Heteroptera, Pentatomidae, Minidini) for Italy is reported. This record extends to the west, the distribution of this species only known in Europe from southern Greece previously.

Key words: Heteroptera, *Neostrachia bisignata*, distribution, first record, Italy, Mediterranean Region.

In Europe, true bugs of the family Pentatomidae are characterised by five-segmented antennae, a developed scutellum covering at least one-third of the abdomen, and a generally oblong, rounded shape (Ribes & Pagola-Carte 2013).

Some species are more elongated, like the genera *Aelia* Fabricius, 1803 and *Mecidea* Dallas, 1851, light yellowish in colour with a pointed head (to go unnoticed on the grasses they like), as well as one darker species with a rounded head, encountered until present only in Greece namely *Neostrachia bisignata* (Walker, 1867).

This species, therefore has a characteristic shape with the edges of the body parallel, which means that it cannot be confused with any other European Pentatomidae species. Males (4.9-5.3 mm) are smaller than females (6 mm) and have a black colouring with more or less contrasting white dorsal markings on the pronotum, scutellum and corium (Ribes & Pagola-Carte 2013).

N. bisignata is a very rare true bug of unknown ecology, and it is only known from four locations in the west-Palearctic region: in Greece in the Peloponnese at Nafplio and Palea Epidauros, in Tunisia near Tebour-souk and in Saudi Arabia at Qatif (Ribes & Pagola-Carte 2013).

The taxonomy of this species has been subject to several changes. Several other genus names were given to this species before synonymising: the genera *Rhaphigaster* Laporte, 1833, *Keriahana* Distant, 1918, *Menida* Motschoulsky, 1862 and *Apines* Dallas, 1851.

The species has been described in India and is also mentioned in Asia from China, Pakistan, and Burma (Rider 2006).

Material examined: ITALY: Riserva naturale statale Torre Guaceto, Province de Brindisi, Puglia, Lat.: 40.709392 Long.: 17.799162, 25.VIII.2023, 1 male, Leonardo Antonio Argeese leg. (Fig. 1) Observation published on iNaturalist the same day (<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/180149432>).



Fig. 1. Male of *Neostrachia bisignata* (Walker, 1867) observed in the Riserva naturale statale Torre Guaceto, Province de Brindisi, Puglia, Italy.

It is difficult to know if its presence in Italy is recent, linked to human activity or climate change or if the species has always been present in Italy and had never been found until now. If it is a recent import, the most likely would be an import from Greece by boat given the number and frequency of maritime connections be-

tween Brindisi and Patras. But an Asian origin cannot be excluded. In any case, it will be appropriate to verify whether *N. bisignata* is established in Italy by prospecting this region in more depth in the years to come.

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