


The first record of carnivorous semislug *Testacella haliotidea* Draparnaud, 1801 in Czechia

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The carnivorous semi-slugs *Testacella haliotidea* (Gastropoda, Pulmonata, Testacellidae) was recorded for the first time in Czechia, Prague. One adult specimen was found in the garden, probably originating from seedlings in the horticulture centre. Other findings about this species in Czechia are expected.

Key words: shelled slug, non-indigenous species

New records of non-indigenous land snail species have rapidly increased in Czechia since the 1990s (PELTANOVÁ et al. 2012). The most frequent origin is that of the Mediterranean region, as the thermophilous terrestrial species are intensively spreading northwards as a response to the recent trend of climate change (ROQUES et al. 2009). As another newcomer, one adult specimen of *Testacella haliotidea* was recorded in the author's garden in Prague. *Testacella* is the only extant genus of the family Testacellidae, a small group of semi-slugs with a Euro-Mediterranean-Macaronesian distribution (RINALDI 2004). These semi-slugs are carnivorous, feeding on earthworms, characterized by a shell rudiment at the very end of the body. *Testacella haliotidea* (Fig. 1) is 6–12 cm long, with a triangular shell of about 6–10 mm length. The animal is greyish yellow or creamy white, foot sole usually whitish. Originating at the shell, there are 2 lateral grooves on the back of the semi-slugs (Fig. 2) (WELTER-SCHULTES 2012). From its probable original region in eastern Spain and southwest France, it has spread to its actual wide distribution. In non-native regions, the occurrence is largely confined to gardens and parks. Up to now, *Testacella haliotidea* was recorded from the south of Great Britain (MARR & SHIPLEY 1904, TAYLOR 2015), Netherlands, Switzerland, and Germany (DE WINTER & VON NIEULANDE 2011), Italy (RINALDI 2004) or Bulgaria (MITOV & DEDOV 2014). Outside Europe, the semi-slugs reached Northern Africa (BORREDÀ & MARTÍNEZ-ORTÍ 2017), New Zealand (BARKER 1979), and the United States (CHICHESTER & GETZ 1973).

This paper reports on the first record of the species in Czechia, on the 20th of May 2022. One adult specimen was found under a wooden board in the author's private garden in Prague, Troja (50.1235N, 14.4401E) shortly after setting vegetable seedlings in the ground. These seedlings were from a horticultural centre in Veltrusy 20 km

northern from Prague and are the probable source of the *Testacella* specimen. An effort was made to find if another specimen is present, but these animals are nocturnal and subterranean in habitat, which complicates the situation and probably makes them under-recorded throughout their entire range (DE WINTER & VON NIEULANDE 2011). The animal found in May was killed in ethanol and it is deposited in National Museum in Prague. Other findings about the occurrence of this species are anticipated.

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Fig. 1. Right-side view of *Testacella haliotideae*. Photo by Štěpánka Podroužková.



Fig. 2. Dorsal view of *Testacella haliotideae*. Photo by Štěpánka Podroužková.