

Scientific note

First record of *Banatoniscus karbani* after its description

(Crustacea, Isopoda)

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Banatoniscus karbani Tăbăcaru, 1991 (Trichoniscidae, Haplophthalminae) was described, based on a single male specimen found in a cave near Reșița in the Banat Mountains. It is considered troglobiont, as the described specimen was collected in a cave. In Banat Mountains unlike other areas from the Romanian Carpathians no endemic troglobiont isopods have been identified until the description of *B. karbani* (Tăbăcaru 1991). Therefore it is supposed to be an endemic troglobiont relict (Tăbăcaru & Giurgincă 2013).

B. karbani was identified during field studies in Banat Mountains in 2015. A single male and female were collected near Brădișoru de Jos (45°06'16.30"N / 21°46'45.76"E, 329 m altitude), 13 km north from the town Oravița (Fig. 1). Specimens were collected near a small spring beside a dirt road and a stream at the base of a slope. The whole region is covered by beech, oak and hornbeam forests. It is a site with many springs and streams. The individuals were found under a large log partially buried in the wet soil. Specimens had typical characteristics of the species. They were depigmented and eyeless with distinct protuberances on the pleon.

This seems to be the first record of *B. karbani* after its description (Tăbăcaru 1991). Both record locations are approximately 30 km apart. Thus, *B. karbani* distribution range is larger as previously thought; its finding outside caves is especially interesting. Its occurrence pattern resembles that of *Mesoniscus graniger*, another terrestrial isopod, which was frequently recorded inside caves, having also endogeic populations (e.g. Giurgincă 2009, Ianc & Ferenți 2014). *B. karbani* was considered

troglobiont because its only record was in a cave, and it was never found in a surface habitat. Nevertheless, these facts open a question regarding the numerous troglobiont terrestrial isopods of Romania (e.g. Tăbăcaru & Giurgincă 2013): are they true troglobionts, or would additional sampling effort change their status of troglobionts? *B. karbani* original characteristics (Tăbăcaru 1991) indicate that this species is really endemic with a high biogeographic value (Tăbăcaru & Giurgincă 2013).

References

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Fig. 1. *Banatoniscus karbani*. a. Individual. b. Distribution records. 1, previous record (Tăbăcaru 1991); 2, new record.

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