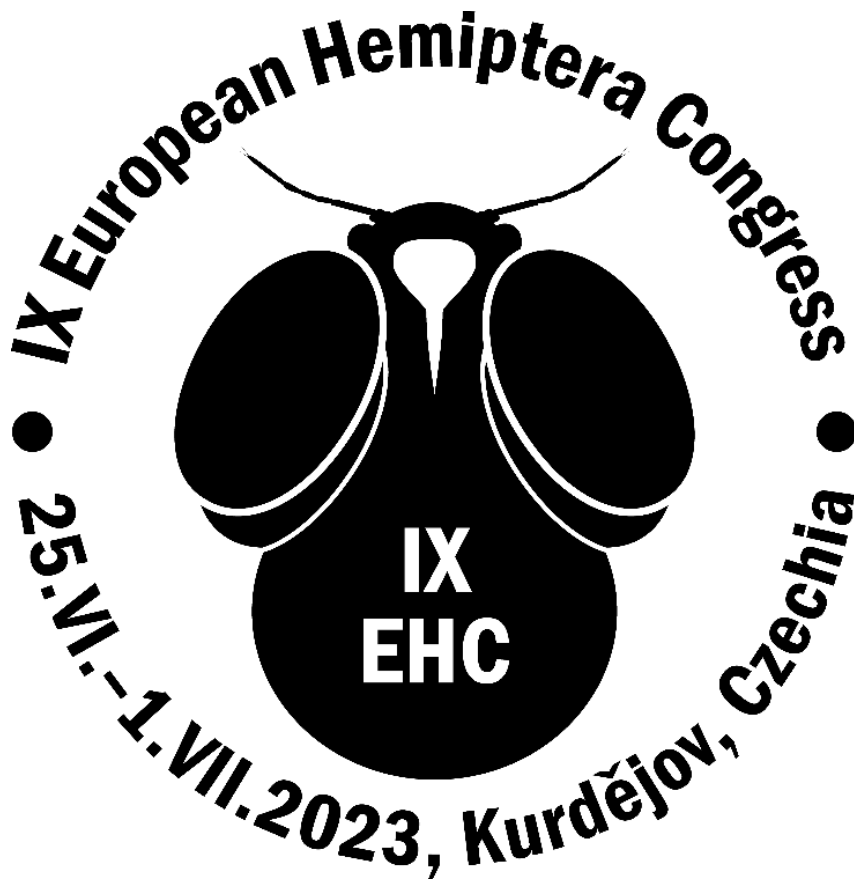


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The quiet spread of *Aleurocanthus spiniferus* (Quaintance, 1903) (Hemiptera, Aleyrodidae) in Europe [P]

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After its first discovery in Europe, in Apulia (Italy) in 2008, the citrus spiny whitefly (CSW), *Aleurocanthus spiniferus* (Quaintance, 1903) (Hemiptera Aleyrodidae) spread throughout the Italian peninsula, as well as in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece and Montenegro. The species has been established mainly in urban areas, infesting ornamental plants in public and private gardens. Recently, CSW is also infesting some important cultivated plants. In Apulia, increasingly intense infestations are reported on grapevines, while in Basilicata, Calabria, Sicily as well as Apulia, the pest is present in commercial groves of *Citrus × sinensis*. The CSW is a polyphagous species, easily adaptable to various environmental conditions. For example, in 2022, the pest was found in a greenhouse in Holland, showing its potential to spread throughout Europe. The main pathway is transportation with infested plant material. From 2021, the diffusion, biology and natural enemies of *A. spiniferus* in Sicilian citrus cultivation areas were investigated through field surveys carried out by direct plant sampling and yellow sticky traps. First observations showed that the pest developed three generations in 2022. The adults of the first generation emerged from the overwintering nymphs in late March, while a second generation followed in late June–early July. The third generation occurred in the middle of October. The presence of the adults lasted for a period ranging from one to almost two months. In one case, overlapping generations were observed, as adults were recorded throughout the period from April to October. Several natural enemies were collected, such as *Zelus renardii* (Kolenati) (Hemiptera, Reduviidae) and *Campyloneura virgula* (Herrich-Schaeffer) (Hemiptera, Miridae). The most interesting species in terms of its abundance and activity was *Serangium montazerii* Fürsch (Coleoptera, Coccinellidae), a predator recorded for the first time in Italy and known as a specific natural antagonist of whiteflies. Studies are underway concerning the development of bio-molecular diagnostic methodologies for a rapid identification of *A. spiniferus* in areas where it has been found as well as for the detection of new outbreaks. These systems support morphological identification and would guarantee a timely genetic identification of the species.

Cuticular structures on the legs of *Himacerus apterus* (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Nabidae) [P]

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Nabidae or damsel bugs is a family of predatory true bugs (Heteroptera) characterized by their fossorial fore- and middle legs. The legs of nabids are densely covered in a great variety of cuticular structures that serve different purposes, like forming part of the fossorial mechanism, facilitating movement, or they have a sensory function. Most of these structures are highly variable between different taxa of Nabidae. The grasping mechanism consists mainly of modified femur and tibia on which there are various cuticular structures that serve to hold the