

NATTERER'S BAT *MYOTIS NATTERERI* (KUHL, 1817)
(CHIROPTERA, VESPERTILIONIDAE) NEW SPECIES
FOR CALABRIA REGION (SOUTHERN ITALY)

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RIASSUNTO - Il Vespertilio di Natterer *Myotis nattereri* (Kuhl, 1817) (Chiroptera, Vespertilionidae) nuova specie per la Calabria. Un maschio di *Myotis nattereri* è stato rinvenuto in Aspromonte il 26/11/2001 in un piccolo edificio in cemento a pochi chilometri da Gambarie d'Aspromonte (Montagna di Reggio, N 38°:08':10", E 15°:50':30") a quota 1350 m in una foresta dominata da Faggio *Fagus sylvatica*. Si tratta del primo ritrovamento per la Calabria e uno dei pochi descritti per l'Italia meridionale.

Key words: *Myotis nattereri*, first record, Calabria region, Southern Italy

Calabria is a southern Italian region of great interest for Chiroptera because of its geographical position, habitat diversity and biogeographic history.

A high number of bat species (N= 21) are currently known for this region (Lanza 1959, Vernier 1979, Crucitti and Tringali 1985, Paolillo 1992, Vergari *et al.* 1997, Zava *et al.*, 1998; Scaravelli *et al.*, 2002 and 2004).

During a mammal survey in the Aspromonte Massif, one specimen of *Myotis nattereri* was found on 26th November 2001 in a small building near to a road at few kilometres from Gambarie d'Aspromonte (Montagna di Reggio, N 38°:08':10", E 15°:50':30") at 1350 m a.s.l. Surrounding environ-

ment is dominated by *Fagus sylvatica* wood. Aspromonte massif is the last southern part of the Italian peninsula. It is characterized by a rough morphology with eroded mountain top, canyons and steep slopes. The climate is mountain-Mediterranean, with two seasons: a long dry summer and a humid and rainy winter (1000-2000 mm median rainfall per year) with snowing periods too (Ciancio, 1971). On the upper part beech forest sometimes mixed with *Abies alba* is the dominant vegetation, followed by *Pinus laricio* and *Quercus petraea* woods, substituted by Mediterranean xerophyllous evergreen maquis at lower level.

The specimen, an adult male collected

manually, died during measurement manipulation, has been identified according to the more recent taxonomical characters (Schober and Grimberger, 1996; Lanza and Agnelli, 1999). In particular, the typical long curved hair at uropatagium border, the relevant size of the tragus and the smooth sinuous ear margin were evident. Measurements (in mm) taken by digital callipers (Mitutoyo) were: wingspan 203.91, head-body 42.93, tail 36.91, forearm 39.88, thumb 5.30, ear 15.01 and tragus 10.28.

The specimen is actually preserved at the Theriological Collection, Department of Ecology, University of Calabria, no. AS187.

Myotis nattereri has a central Asiatic-European distribution (Lanza and Agnelli, 1999), from Portugal and western Maghreb to Median Orient, reaching the 63° parallel to north (Bogdanowicz, 1999). In Italy, data about its distribution are actually still full of gaps and mainly concentrated in the northern and central areas. In southern regions some records are available for Campania, Sicily and Molise (historical data) (Agnelli *et al.*, 2004).

Our finding represents the most southern Italian peninsular record of *Myotis nattereri* range (Lanza and Finotello, 1985). It enlarges our knowledge on a species historically considered rare, especially in southern Italian regions (Gulino and Dal Piaz, 1939; Lanza, 1959), and currently classified as “Endangered” (Dondini and Vergari, 1997) or as “lower risk” at global level (Hutson *et al.*, 2001).

This new record underlines the need to deepen naturalistic researches in south-

ern Italy where interesting faunistic surprises are still emerging (Aloise and Cagnin, 2003; Scaravelli *et al.*, 2004; Aloise *et al.*, in press).

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