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The wild boar *Sus scrofa* Linnaeus, 1758 as a predator of scorpions (Scorpiones) in north-western Algeria (Mammalia, Suidae)

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Abstract: A case of predation of scorpions by a wild boar *Sus scrofa* Linnaeus, 1758 (Mammalia, Suidae) is reported, based on a recent observation of scorpion fragments in wild boar feces in the forest of Ouarsenis, Tissemsilt (north-western Algeria). Although this mammal is considered as an opportunistic omnivore, it consumes primarily plant material (94% by volume), and animal matter (birds, worms and terrestrial arthropods) constitutes only about 10% of its diet. Scorpions are here recorded for the first time as wild boar prey.
Key words: Scorpiones, wild boars, predation, Algeria.

El jabalí, *Sus scrofa* Linnaeus, 1758 (Mammalia, Suidae), depredando escorpiones (Scorpiones) en Argelia noroccidental
Resumen: Se reporta un caso de depredación de escorpiones por jabalíes, *Sus scrofa* Linnaeus, 1758 (Mammalia, Suidae), a partir de la reciente observación de fragmentos de escorpión en heces de jabalí en el bosque de Ouarsenis, Tissemsilt (noroeste de Argelia). Aunque este mamífero está caracterizado como omnívoro oportunista, consume primariamente materia vegetal (94% por volumen), y las sustancias de origen animal (aves, gusanos y artrópodos terrestres) constituyen sólo alrededor del 10% de su dieta. Se registra aquí por primera vez el consumo de escorpiones por jabalíes.
Palabras clave: Scorpiones, jabalíes, depredación, Argelia.

Many animals can feed on scorpions. Polis *et al*. (1981) summarized a list of approximately 150 taxa of scorpion predators, which were mostly vertebrates. Among these taxa, birds are the main predators of scorpions, with a higher percentage of 37% (Lourenço & Cloudsley-Thompson, 2008). In 2015, Dupré resume a list of 312 species can be considered as scorpion predators with more than 80% are vertebrates (Birds, Mammalia and Reptiles).

This note aims to amend this mammalian list with Wild Boars *Sus scrofa* Linnaeus, 1758 basing on recent observations of the scorpion's fragments in its feces in Sabbouh region, state forest of Ouarsenis, Tissemsilt (North- West Algeria) (Fig.1-2).

This note concerns Wild Boars (Fig. 3) which is abundant in many parts of its range and it is original Mammalia in North Africa and in Algeria (Keuling & Leus, 2019). This species has a highly diverse diet (Rosell *et al*., 2001; Baubet *et al*., 2004; Irizar *et al*., 2004) and it is ranked as an opportunist omnivore species (Schley & Roper, 2003; Massei & Genov, 2004; Herrero *et al*., 2005; Hafeez *et al*., 2011). Despite, the boar population consumed primarily plant material more 94% by volume (Giménez-Anaya *et al*., 2008), the animal matter constitutes only about 10% of the diet (birds, worms and terrestrial arthropods) which are energetically rewarding (Herrero *et al*., 2006).

In Sabbouh region (35°52'48''N 1°37'4''E) and at an altitude exceeding 1480 m, this species was observed many times searching for worms and terrestrial arthropods in the underground. In the following illustration (Fig.4) we see clearly the traces of this animal flushing out scorpions, through the process of digging the soil and flipping rocks.

In analysis of the fecal matter of Wild Boars from study area (Fig. 5), we observed the presence in abundance of scorpion fragments (Fig. 6). The identification of these fragments led us to identify one species of scorpion, *Buthus tunetanus* (Herbst, 1800). This species is the widespread one in Algeria (Lourenço *et al*., 2020) and the most abundant scorpion in North-west Algeria (Ouici *et al*., 2020), Where, we reported the presence of this species in the study area (Fig. 7).

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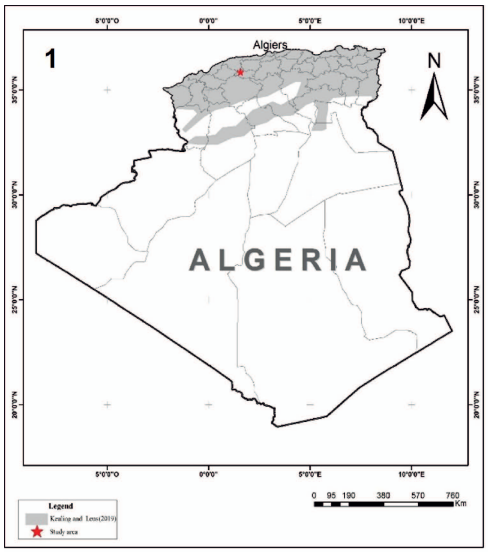


Fig.1-2. Study area. **1**, Map of Algeria showing study area. **2**, General view of Sabbouh region, state forest of Ouarsenis, Tissemsilt (North- West Algeria). **Fig. 3-4.** Wild Boars in natural biotope.**3**, general view of Wild Boars. **4**, traces of Wild Boars flushing out scorpions. **Fig. 5-6.** Wild Boars fecal matter analysis. **5**, general view of feces. **6**, fragments of *Buthus tunetanus* in the feces. **Fig. 7.** *Buthus tunetanus* in natural study area.







