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Editorial note

Biodiversity in transformation

This edition of *Zoologia Caboverdiana* once again highlights the remarkable biological richness of the Cabo Verde archipelago, as well as the swift processes of change affecting its marine and terrestrial fauna. The three contributions gathered here illustrate this duality of natural uniqueness, knowledge gaps, and clear signs of ongoing ecological transformation particularly well.

The first article documents the first case of anomalous pigmentation in cetaceans in Macaronesia, concerning a rough-toothed dolphin with pigmentation deficiency. The publication titled "*Anomalous pigmentation in rough-toothed dolphins* (Steno bredanensis) *from Cabo Verde: first report in the Macaronesia region*" emphasises that one individual probably exhibits leucism or piebaldism. This case represents also only the second known case for the species across the entire African continent. Beyond its descriptive value, the work discusses the ecological implications of this rare phenomenon and underscores its extremely low prevalence among dolphin populations. It also draws attention to the importance of ongoing photo-identification and long-term monitoring programmes.

The second contribution is a brief note entitled "*The beetle* Pinoplanus aegyptius *(Erichson, 1840) arrives on Boavista, Cabo Verde (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae, Paederinae)*". This publication focuses on the first recorded sighting of the Egyptian rove beetle on the island of Boavista, which was caught using light traps in the Sal Rei dunes. The capture of one male and two females, which have now been added to reference collections, confirms the presence of this species in the archipelago. It also suggests that a wider distribution on other islands may be revealed by further surveys using similar methods. At the same time, the authors highlight a critical point: practically nothing is known about the ecology of this species. The fact that the records are associated with artificial light in dune habitats raises relevant questions about habitat use, behaviour, and potential responses to anthropogenic light sources, thereby reinforcing the need for targeted ecological studies.

The third publication reveals another apparently isolated record that sheds light on a widespread biogeographical process: the growing threat posed by the introduction of exotic species. In the short note "*Expansion of the distribution area of the house gecko in the Cabo Verde Archipelago: new record in São Nicolau*" the authors identified a juvenile *Hemidactylus mabouia* inside a residence in Ribeira Brava based on its morphological and molecular characteristics. The results confirm that this belongs to the same lineage as that reported on other islands, which supports the hypothesis of a recent introduction and ongoing expansion in the archipelago. This finding, when considered alongside with previous studies, alerts to the increasing homogenisation of insular reptile fauna and the associated risks of invasive species in fragile ecosystems.

Together, these studies highlight three key messages that *Zoologia Caboverdiana* intends to continue promoting: i) the importance of occurrences records and unique cases (e.g., abnormal pigmentation) in understanding patterns of natural variability; ii) the urgency of addressing fundamental gaps in the natural history and ecology of many taxa that have yet to be studied in depth; and iii) the necessity of integrating classical approaches (e.g., morphology, and field observation) with

modern tools (e.g., genetics, photo-identification, and light traps) when monitoring Cabo Verdean biodiversity.

We invite the national and international scientific community to read this issue and to continue using *Zoologia Caboverdiana* as a platform to disseminate studies that deepen knowledge about Cabo Verdean fauna and guide conservation actions in this unique archipelago.

As we approach the end of the year, we hope that the severity of the climate crisis will be urgently recognised by global society, as the intensification of extreme events, which has been widely discussed at recent COP meetings, has a direct impact on worldwide biodiversity and particularly severe effects on small island developing states like Cabo Verde.

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