Das Projekt „Habitat Schlern / Sciliar“

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Abstract

The “Habitat Schlern/Sciliar” Project

The “Habitat Schlern/Sciliar” interdisciplinary project is presented. It was initiated by the Museum of Nature South Tyrol and carried out in collaboration with the provincial Office of Nature Parks, the Department of Forestry of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano-South Tyrol, professional experts, and private sponsors. The aim of the project was an inventory of the flora and fauna of the Schlern (Sciliar) area in South Tyrol, Italy, which is part of the “Schlern-Rosengarten” Nature Park. During the 19th century, this mountain was the destination of numerous floristic and faunistic excursions. Thus, the present investigation was intended as a kind of revival of those activities after several decades without records in the region. The main goals of the study were firstly, to approach a complete species list of the Schlern as far as possible; secondly, to compare current data with those available from the literature; and thirdly, to give recommendations for nature conservancy measures. In total, 23 groups of organisms were investigated during 2006 and 2007 in 16 selected sites representing different habitats.

The main scientific results of the completed study may be summarized as follows: firstly, species richness and species diversity reveal the Schlern area as an outstanding and important site for the flora and fauna of South Tyrol. Within the framework of the project, a total of 4,862 taxa were recorded, with Lepidoptera (1,030 taxa) as the most species-rich group, followed by vascular plants (794), fungi (578), spiders (350), lichens (257), oribatid mites (251), mosses (250) and rove beetles (237). Secondly, a concerted project like the present one may contribute significantly to the knowledge of the actual species inventory of a given area. The astonishingly high number of new species records shows that many groups of organisms are still little known in South Tyrol, not only in the study area but also in the entire territory of the province. In conclusion, 336 taxa found in the Schlern area turned out to be new records for South Tyrol, among them 124 new records even for Italy. The groups with most new records are Phoridae (Diptera) and Oribatida. Finally, the scientific impact of the interdisciplinary project “Habitat Schlern/Sciliar” is highlighted by 12 species new to science (9 Phoridae and 3 Oribatida).

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