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## **Neuroptera (Insecta) of Pantelleria, the Pelagic Islands and the Maltese archipelago: towards an annotated checklist with new records**

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The Pelagic Block, which belongs to the North-Africa Plate, is a relatively stable area, largely under water, with its central portion represented by the Sicilian Channel. From West to East, the islands belonging to the Pelagic Block include Pantelleria, the Pelagic Islands and the Maltese archipelago. These Mediterranean islands have a high ecological and biogeographical significance since they bridge the gap between Europe and North Africa. However, many factors make it difficult to decipher their biogeographical patterns. These include (i) the complex geological evolution combined with the more recent impact of human activity; (ii) the shortage of data as a result of the inaccessibility of many sites and difficult logistics; and (iii) the political subdivision between Italy and Malta which, especially in the past, resulted in biodiversity studies limited to only one of the aforementioned countries. Thus, the availability of accurate data related to species identification and revised checklists should be a first step towards the establishment of a study for biogeographical analysis of the region.

Taking into account published and unpublished records, a revised and annotated checklist of the Neuroptera found in Pantelleria, the Pelagic Islands and the Maltese archipelago was compiled. Historical records were reported even if sometimes their identification was not completely reliable. The nomenclature of previously published data was updated and doubtful records were also indicated. The included species belong to five families namely, Coniopterygidae, Hemerobiidae, Chrysopidae, Myrmeleontidae and Ascalaphidae.

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