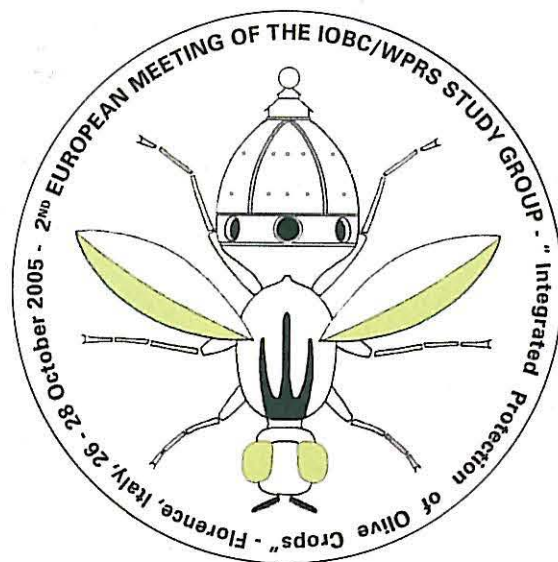


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COCCINELLIDAE COMMUNITIES: DIVERSITY AND DYNAMICS IN ORGANIC AND INTEGRATED OLIVE GROVES FROM TRÁS-OS-MONTES (NORTHEAST OF PORTUGAL)

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Coccinellidae are well known predators in agroecosystems. In olive groves they may exert control against scales, such as the black-scale, *Saissetia oleae* (Olivier) and other minor pests. The aims of this work were *i*) to study the diversity of Coccinellidae species in two olive groves with different plant protection systems (integrated plant protection – Paradela grove, and organic growing guidelines – Valbom-dos-Figos grove); *ii*) to analyse the dynamics of these predators, and *iii*) to compare the differences between groves. The experimental work was carried out from April 2002 to November 2003. Weekly, in each grove, five plots of ten olive trees per plot were randomly selected and one branch was sampled per tree using the beating technique. The captured Coccinellidae were identified to species level. Experimental results showed the existence of differences between olive groves and years. A total of 17 species belonging to nine genera were identified. In Paradela, *Rhyzobius chrysomeloides* (Herbst.) was the most abundant species representing 40%, followed by *Scymnus (Pullus) mediterraneus* Khnz., with 17%, *Scymnus (Pullus) subvillosus* Gze. and *Stethorus punctillum* (Ws.), both with 10% of total captured individuals. In Valbom-dos-Figos, the community of Coccinellidae was more diversified and *Scymnus (Scymnus) interruptus* Gze. was the dominant species with 56% of total captures, followed by *Rhyzobius chrysomeloides* (Herbst.), with 19% and *Chilocorus bipustulatus* L., with 10%.