

ferentiation from other congeneric species consult the appropriate sections.

Electrophoretic comparisons of *T. semilaeve* from Banyuls-sur-Mer with our Italian samples revealed only minor deviations in allele frequencies at two loci (Sanetra, unpubl.), which confirm our inclusion of the Italian populations in typical *T. semilaeve*. In Italy, no less than five varieties of *T. semilaeve* have been taxonomically separated from the typical one. Three of them described by Santschi (1927) were stated to be Sicilian endemics. Recently this unrealistic subdivision was uncritically reinforced by Poldi et al. (1995) by listing four different subspecies of *T. semilaeve* for Italy alone. Such a treatment is surely incompatible with a modern subspecies concept, and we try to elucidate the status of these forms as far as possible. *T. semilaeve siciliense* Santschi, 1927 easily emerges as a synonym of *T. semilaeve* upon examination of the syntypes. Other workers filed as *T. siciliense* by Santschi originated from Sicily (Segesta) and France (Var), obviously all typical *T. semilaeve*. *T. semilaeve* var. *jugurtha* Menozzi, 1932, elevated to species rank by Poldi et al. (1995), was also reported from Sicily (Palermo) by Santschi (1921). However, applying this name to Italian material seems highly doubtful, since it is not even known how this North African taxon relates to others in that region.

The range of *T. semilaeve* purportedly covers the entire Mediterranean region. Nevertheless, it seems likely that there exists at least some divergence between a "western" and an "eastern" form, the latter often referred to as *T. punicum* (Smith, 1861) originally described from Israel. Given the insufficiency of the original description along with the types apparently being lost (Santschi, 1920), there is hardly any way to determine to which species the name *punicum* really applies. Thus, *T. punicum* may best be treated as a *nomen dubium*. Specimens assignable to the "eastern" form share a *Gpi* electromorph which is obviously lacking in the western Mediterranean populations and also an *Idh* electromorph very rare in samples from farther west (Sanetra, unpubl.). A borderline might be situated between the Balkan Peninsula and the Middle East, but much more research into this problem has to be done. According to some authors (e.g., Radchenko, 1992b) the species is presumed to be more widely distributed in Transcaucasia and even Central Asia. An electrophoretically investigated sample from Crimea, however, seems to represent a species different from the typical *T. semilaeve* of the Mediterranean.

The majority of localities sampled in southern Italy were dominated by *T. semilaeve*. However, due to its affinity to very warm and dry places it seldom occurs above 1000m. Queens were rarely collected, and thus we regard *T. semilaeve* as monogynous at least in Italy. It often shares its habitat with *T. diomedaeum* and sometimes with *T. punctatum* in Sicily and Calabria which likewise are very thermophilous species. The published records suggest (Baroni Urbani, 1971) that *T. semilaeve* becomes increasingly uncommon and localized towards the north, since there have been very few findings north of the Apennines. Given the possibility of confusing *T. semilaeve* workers with *T. caespitum*, all available records from north of the Alps (Santschi, 1927; Werner, 1989; Schulz, 1991) must be regarded as dubious, unless substantiation by the unmistakable sexuals is provided.

***Tetramorium punctatum* Santschi, 1927, stat. nov. [Figs. 6, 8, 15]**

Tetramorium semilaeve André v. *punctatum* Santschi, 1927

Tetramorium semilaeve André v. *liparaeum* Santschi, 1927: **syn. nov.**