

EVOLUTION MEGALAB NEWSLETTER: ISSUE 4 SEPTEMBER 2008

Thank you to everyone who submitted news for this issue. If you have any news that you would like to be included in a future issue, please email it to Jenny at j.p.worthington@open.ac.uk by the 20th of the month.

NEW SUPPORT WEBSITE

A new support website has been developed which it is hoped will be more user-friendly than the Google Groups website.

The new website is available at:

www.open.ac.uk/lemisupport

Would collaborators be happy for their names to be listed on the support website? If you do not want your name included please let us know.

A page outlining organisations that have provided funding for the Evolution MegaLab has also been added. Please let us know if you would like any information added for your country on this page.

PDF UPDATES

The PDF's on snail ID and snail recording are available for translation. These can be accessed at:

<http://www.evolutionmegalab.org/en/information/viewInstructions>

To translate the PDFs either use a PDF editor or contact me and I will send you the original versions of the documents.

To overcome the collecting issues in each country, please can you alter the information on the recording sheet to suit your country. In the UK we have referred to the Country Code but this would not be applicable for other countries.

ACCESSIBLE PDFs

If you would like to provide an alternative version of the PDFs, so that people who have problems opening Adobe can still view the documents, please let us know.

You will need to provide us with an RTF version of each document.



EVOLUTION MEGALAB ACTIVITIES: HUNGARY

A presentation about the Evolution MegaLab was held at the 32nd Annual Hungarian Malacological Meeting in Szarvas in September. Hungarian and Slovak specialists participated the meeting, and all were impressed by the project. Participants also gave valuable feedback:

(1) *C. nemoralis* is indigenous only in western Hungary, while *C. hortensis* is indigenous in western Hungary and in southwestern Slovakia, however both species especially the latter one are spreading aggressively eastwards. Within the newly occupied range, variability of the populations is mostly driven by chance (founder effect) rather than by selection.

(2) Shell collectors have draw attention to observed cases of darkening of *Cepaea* shell colour during long storage (especially in the case of pink morphs), thus museum deposited materials might be biased by false positive brown shells.

We inspected the collection of the Hungarian Natural History Museum and the private collection of Gábor Majoros (Budapest, Hungary) and registered morph counts for 151 samples (5557 individuals) of *C. hortensis*, and 113 samples (3033 individuals) of *C. nemoralis*. Then we excluded samples with low sample size (< 10 individuals), excluded drifted material as well, and aggregated samples where location, date and collector were identical. As a result, now we have 131 samples (5484 individuals) of *C. hortensis*, and 102 samples (3023 individuals) of *C. nemoralis*. We found some cases where ground colours (dark pink or brown) were easy to determine, but according to the cautions and the very low numbers of such cases (17 individuals all together), we included these morphs into the pinks.

The collecting date of samples spans from 1913 to 2001 with half of the samples between 1966 and 1993, and median is 1980. We have two repeated samples from 15 locations and more than two visits from 12 locations. We have 13 repeated

samples from Vonyarcvashegy, from the yard of the Pintér family.

As concerns field access of the public volunteers, we clarified the legal issues around the two protected *Cepaea* species. Volunteers can observe animals in the field as long as the do not collect them for captivity and collection purposes. Consequently, there is no legal barrier against in the field observations and data collection. Our next step will be to prepare the grounds for informing the public via popular natural history magazines and NGOs. We also plan to make a Hungarian derivative website for the project to cope with country specific issues and for easier updating.

