

**The third and most significant record of
Chilostoma banaticum (Rossmässler, 1838)
/ = *Helicigona banatica*/ in Hungary
(Tiszabecs, floodplain of River Tisa)**

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From 21st to 27th September 1992 we were busy surveying flora and fauna in the vicinity of Tiszabecs. One day Anikó Szabó found the species in the so-called Szabó-Willow-Grove in the floodplain (geographical coordinates: 48° 06' 50" N, 22° 49' 30" E). The observed great quantity of empty snail shells indicated a large population of the species. The population occupies a 100-200 m wide zone of the left-side bank of the river, starting at a 30-50 m distance from the riverbed. The habitat covers approximately 15 hectares. On the periphery of the biotope (on roughly 8-10 hectares) an average of 1-2 individuals were found per square metre, and on a 5-6 hectare piece of the central area the mean number individuals was 2-25 (confirmed by data of joint census with Pál Sümegi, Kossuth Lajos University, Debrecen - Fintha - Sümegi et al. 1993).

According to our moderate counted-estimated data, *Helicigona banatica* (= *Chilostoma banatica*) can be found in a viable population of ten thousand or more individuals in the area.

The entire area of the floodplain is dominated by semi-cultivated character: there are planted walnut groves, wild-growing orchards (a mixture of plum-, apple-, walnut- and mulberry trees) in transition to softwood forests (*Salicetum albae-fragilis*), with the latter being present only in small fragments.

The vegetation patch inhabited by the highest density population of the snail is, curiously enough, a forest grove which either was planted in the middle of an ancient willow-poplar forest or had been a forest the management of which was discontinued. Presently it is mainly an *Acacia* grove (*Robinietum*) with some box-elder (*Acer negundo*). In its undergrowth elder-berry (*Sambucus nigra*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and chickweed (*Stellaria media*) can be found sporadically.

Along its direct border a dense edge-vegetation preserves the microclimate of the habitat, which acts as a bottom of a glass bell, composed of a closed mass of *Reynoutria japonica* and false earthbine (*Helianthus decapetalus*).

In the neighbouring vegetation we have found some individuals of the species, but none were found in the poplar plantation.

Other species of the snail fauna of the habitat in Tiszabecs (Fintha - Sümegi et al. 1993) are:

Carychium minimum (Müller, 1774)
 Cochlicopa lubrica (Müller, 1774)
 Vallonia pulchella (Müller, 1774)
 Arion subfuscus (Draparnaud, 1805)
 Zonitoides nitidus (Müller, 1774)
 Bradibaena fruticum (Müller, 1774)
 Euomphalia strigella (Draparnaud, 1801)
 Cepaea vindobonensis (Férussac, 1821)
 Helix pomatia Linnaeus, 1758
 Helix lutescens Rossmässler, 1837

Chilostoma [=Helicogonia/ banaticum [=banatica/], a species of outstanding faunistical importance, is an endemism of the Carpathian Basin, being legally protected in Hungary. Its nature conservation value is 10.000 HUF. The habitat of this species should be designated as a protected area of national importance.

Reference

Fintha I.-Sümegei P.-Szilágyi G. (1993): A Chilostoma banaticum faj új élőhelye Magyarországon (A new biotope of Chilostoma banaticum in Hungary). - Malakológiai Tájékoztató, 12. pp. 29-33.

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