



# Article

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## A new species of *Allecula* (Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae: Alleculinae) from cork oak stands of Italy

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### Abstract

A new species of comb-clawed beetle, *Allecula suberina* Novák **sp. nov.**, is described, illustrated and compared with all western Palaearctic species. The new species is probably saproxylic, as are other species in the genus, because all specimens were collected by traps set within or near tree cavities on old hollow cork oaks (*Quercus suber*).

**Key words:** Comb-clawed beetles, taxonomy, key to species, saproxylic beetles, hollow trees, *Quercus suber*, Italy

### Introduction

Old oaks have a very rich insect fauna in Europe, but the habitat has declined substantially in most countries. Saproxylic insects associated with old trees and dead wood are one of the most endangered invertebrate groups in Europe, as their habitat has severely decreased (McLean & Speight 1993). These insects live in fungal fruiting bodies, dead wood outside the tree (in branches, twigs or parts of the trunk) or inside the tree in hollows (Palm 1959; Speight 1989; Dajoz 2000). Many species dependent on old and hollow trees have survived in small remnant woodlands of ancient trees, often in an agricultural landscape (Speight 1989; Warren & Key 1989). Most *Allecula* species are saproxylic beetles and undergo their larval development in the rotten wood of old hollow trees (Palm, 1959).

The genus *Allecula* was introduced by Fabricius (1801) for *Allecula morio* (Fabricius 1787), originally described in the suppressed *Cistela* Geoffroy, 1762. The species of this genus have a worldwide distribution: Novák & Pettersson (2008) listed 65 species from the Palaearctic region. From the western part of the Palaearctic region only seven species have been described: *Allecula morio* (Fabricius, 1787) and *Allecula rhenana* Bach, 1856 (both in many European countries); *Allecula divisa* Reitter, 1883 (Armenia, Caucasus, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan); *Allecula oronthea* Baudi di Selve, 1881 (Lebanon and Turkey); *Allecula estriata* Seidlitz, 1896, *Allecula janssoni* Novák, 2011 and *Allecula turcica* Novák, 2011 (all from Turkey). The last two species were recently described and captured by means of traps for saproxylic beetles (Novák *et al.* 2011), the same type used for our samples.

In the present paper, *Allecula suberina* Novák **sp. nov.** is described from Italy, illustrated and compared with other European *Allecula* species.