New records of *Theridion uhligi* and *Evarcha michailovi* (Araneae: Theridiidae, Salticidae) for the Czech Republic and other notable spiders from southern Moravia

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Abstract. During a student excursion to South Moravia, several faunistically remarkable spider species were recorded. Among them were two rarely collected xerothermic spider species previously unknown from the Czech Republic: *Theridion uhligi* Martin, 1974 and *Evarcha michailovi* Logunov, 1992. Their taxonomy, diagnostics, distribution and ecology are discussed. Re-examination of historical museum specimens revealed the long-term presence of *Evarcha michailovi* at the studied locality. Both species are considered rare and endangered to some extent in Germany, and further research should be made to clarify their ecological requirements in the Czech Republic as well.

Keywords: check-list, citizen science, ecology, Faunistics

Zusammenfassung. Erstnachweise für *Theridion uhligi* und *Evarcha michailovi* (Araneae: Theridiidae, Salticidae) für die Tschechische Republik sowie weitere bedeutende Spinnenfunde aus Südmähren. Während einer studentischen Exkursion nach Südmähren wurden mehrere faunistisch bemerkenswerte Spinnenarten erfasst. Unter diesen befanden sich zwei selten gesammelte xerotherme Spinnenarten, die für die Tschechische Republik bislang unbekannt waren: *Theridion uhligi* Martin, 1974 und *Evarcha michailovi* Logunov, 1992. Deren Taxonomie, Diagnostik, Verbreitung und Ökologie werden hier diskutiert. Eine erneute Untersuchung historischen Museumsmaterials belegt das langjährige Vorkommen von *Evarcha michailovi* im Untersuchungsgebiet. Beide Arten gelten in Deutschland als selten und in gewissem Maße gefährdet; daher sollten weitere Untersuchungen auch in der Tschechischen Republik angestellt werden, um die ökologischen Ansprüche zu klären.

Abstrakt. První nálezy *Theridion uhligi* a *Evarcha michailovi* (Araneae: Theridiidae, Salticidae) v České republice a další významné nálezy pavouků na jižní Moravě. Během studentské exkurze na jižní Moravu bylo učiněno několik pozoruhodných nálezů pavouků. Mimo jiné byly odhaleny dva druhy pavouků doposud nezaznamenané na území České republiky: *Theridion uhligi* Martin, 1974 a *Evarcha michailovi* Logunov, 1992. Je diskutována jejich taxonomie, determinace, rozšíření a ekologie. Revize historického muzejního materiálu odhalila dlouhodobý výskyt *Evarcha michailovi* na lokalitě nálezu. Oba druhy jsou v Německu považovány za vzácné a do určité míry ohrožené. Na místě je proto snaha o určení ekologických nároků obou druhů i na území České republiky.

In the last week of June 2024, a student field trip to renowned sites in South Moravia (southeastern part of the Czech Republic) was organized with the intention of introducing the local biota to high school students interested in biology. At the same time, based on an agreement with representatives of the local nature conservation, a brief faunistic and floristic survey of the selected sites was carried out.

The biogeography of South Moravia is unique in the context of the Czech Republic, especially due to the penetration of Pannonian elements from the south. The visited sites in the Pálava Protected Landscape Area and the surrounding area are known for the occurrence of very rare species (e.g. Buchar & Růžička 2002, Bryja et al. 2005). The steppe locality Pouzdřanská step – Kolby National Nature Monument (Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM) was one of the visited localities. The database of the Czech Arachnological Society (Arachnology.cz) presents 253 species of spiders in the Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM. Although records of several common and widespread species are apparently missing in the database, this site is still one of the most species-rich in the Czech Republic and covers almost a third of the Czech spider diversity.

In this paper, we present our most important records from this area and describe two new species for Czechia, *Theridion uhligi* Martin, 1974 and *Evarcha michailovi* Logunov, 1992, which had already been briefly reported in faunistic news by Machač (2024). The checklist of Czech spiders currently comprises 922 species (Růžička et al. 2025).

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Material and methods

The material was collected between 24. and 28. June 2024 at selected natural sites in the Pálava Protected Landscape Area and the surrounding landscape. The main collecting methods were sweeping, individual collecting and suction sampling with a modified commercial leaf blower. Preservation of the samples was done in the field by storing them in 75% ethyl alcohol and stored together according to their sampling locations. Voucher specimens are now deposited in the personal collection of the main author. The identification was carried out using Roberts (1998) and by comparing additional available illustrations and the identification key in Nentwig et al. (2024) and the literature cited in the sections "Description and diagnosis". The nomenclature was standardized according to the World Spider Catalog (2026). Specimen photographs were taken using a Bresser Advance ICD 10x–160x stereomicroscope equipped with an OM System OM-5 camera. The distribution map of *Evarcha michailovi* was generated using the QGIS software, based on data from Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF.org 2026) and AraGes (Arachnologische Gesellschaft 2026).

Results and discussion

A total of 131 species and 499 individuals of arachnids were collected. Species new for the fauna of the Czech Republic are *Theridion uhligi* and *Evarcha michailovi*. The Czech checklist of spiders now contains 922 species (Růžička et al. 2025).

A list of the more faunistically significant records (sensu Řezáč 2026 redlist categories „Endangered" and higher, newly expanding species, etc.) is attached below. The complete list of recorded species has been provided to local nature conservation authorities, access to protected areas was arranged in coordination with them.

Araneidae
Neoscona adianta (Walckenaer, 1802)
1 j. Sedlec (48.77450°N, 16.69812°E; 176 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, ruderal vegetation with *Solidago canadensis* near the train station, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Cheiracanthiidae
Cheiracanthium elegans Thorell, 1875
1 ♂ Dolní Věstonice (48.88273°N, 16.65181°E; 228 m a.s.l.) sweeping, vineyard, 25. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Hahniidae
Hahniharmia picta (Kulczyński, 1897)
1 ♀, 1 j. Přítluky, Nové Mlýny: Křivé Jezero NNR (48.84579°N, 16.72799°E; 164 m a.s.l.) individual collecting, under bark of an old willow tree on the flood meadow, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Linyphiidae
Agyneta simplicitarsis (Simon, 1884)
3 ♀♀ Pouzdřany: Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM (48.94748°N, 16.64460°E; 280 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on loess, 24. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.; 7 ♂♂, 14 ♀♀ Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77579°N, 16.69734°E; 175 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, inland salt marsh, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.; 1 ♀ Sedlec (48.77450°N, 16.69812°E; 176 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, ruderal vegetation with *Solidago canadensis* near the train stop, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Prinerigone vagans (Audouin, 1826)
2 ♂♂, 5 ♀♀ Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77579°N, 16.69734°E; 175 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, inland salt marsh, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Trichoncus hackmani Millidge, 1955
1 ♀ Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77642°N, 16.69881°E; 176 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, halophilous reedland, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Miturgidae
Zora armillata Simon, 1878
1 ♀ Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77642°N, 16.69881°E; 176 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, halophilous reedland, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Mysmenidae
Microdipoena jobi (Kraus, 1967)
4 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀ Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77579°N, 16.69734°E; 175 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, inland salt marsh, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.; 8 ♂♂, 25 ♀♀, 21 jj. Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77642°N, 16.69881°E; 176 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, halophilous reedland, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Philodromidae
Rhysodromus histrio (Latreille, 1819)
1 j. Sedlec: Slanisko u Nesytu NNR (48.77579°N, 16.69734°E; 175 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, inland salt marsh, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Salticidae
Evarcha michailovi Logunov, 1992
1 ♂ Pouzdřany: Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM (48.94748°N, 16.64460°E; 280 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on loess, 24. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg. Species new for the Czech Republic.

Phlegra cinereofasciata (Simon, 1868)
1 ♂, 1 ♀ Pavlov: Děvín NNR (48.87510°N, 16.66149°E; 413 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on limestone, 25. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.; 1 ♀ Mikulov: Svatý kopeček NM (48.80564°N, 16.64631°E; 340 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on limestone, 26. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Synageles hilarulus (C. L. Koch, 1846)
2 ♀♀ Pouzdřany: Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM (48.94541°N, 16.63852°E; 252 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on loess, 24. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Theridiidae
Dipoena torva (Thorell, 1875)
1 ♀ Milovice (48.84971°N, 16.69199°E; 186 m a.s.l.) individual collecting, on a *Tilia cordata* trunk in a park, 27. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Euryopis quinqueguttata Thorell, 1875
1 ♂, 1 ♀ Mikulov: Svatý kopeček NM (48.80564°N, 16.64631°E; 340 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on limestone, 26. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.

Theridion uhligi Martin, 1974
1 ♂, 1 ♀ Pouzdřany: Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM (48.94748°N, 16.64460°E; 280 m a.s.l.) sweeping, dry grassland on loess, 24. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg.; 2 ♂♂ Uherčice: Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM (48.94698°N, 16.64921°E; 257 m a.s.l.) suction sampling, dry grassland on loess, 24. Jun. 2024, Ondřej Vaněk leg. Species new for the Czech Republic.

Theridion uhligi Martin, 1974
Description and diagnosis. The species was described from locus typicus at Pimpinellenberg on the basis of the female holotype (Martin 1974). Three years later, Jocqué (1977) described *Theridion hubei* based on material from Kalmthout, Belgium. The species was subsequently regarded as a junior synonym based on Martin's comparison with the holotype of *T. uhligi* (Bosmans & Janssen 1982).

Individuals of *T. uhligi* are light grey on the lateral sides of the opisthosoma, with the lighter lobed patch on the dorsal side varying in contrast to the ground colour. The prosoma, as well as the legs, is yellowish to light orange with narrow dark margins and a foveal patch (Fig. 1a, c). Identification based on the copulatory organs is straightforward, especially in males (Grbić et al. 2021). Morphologically, according to Jocqué (1977), the species most closely resembles *T. hannoniae* and *T. petraeum*, but the differences in the structure of the median

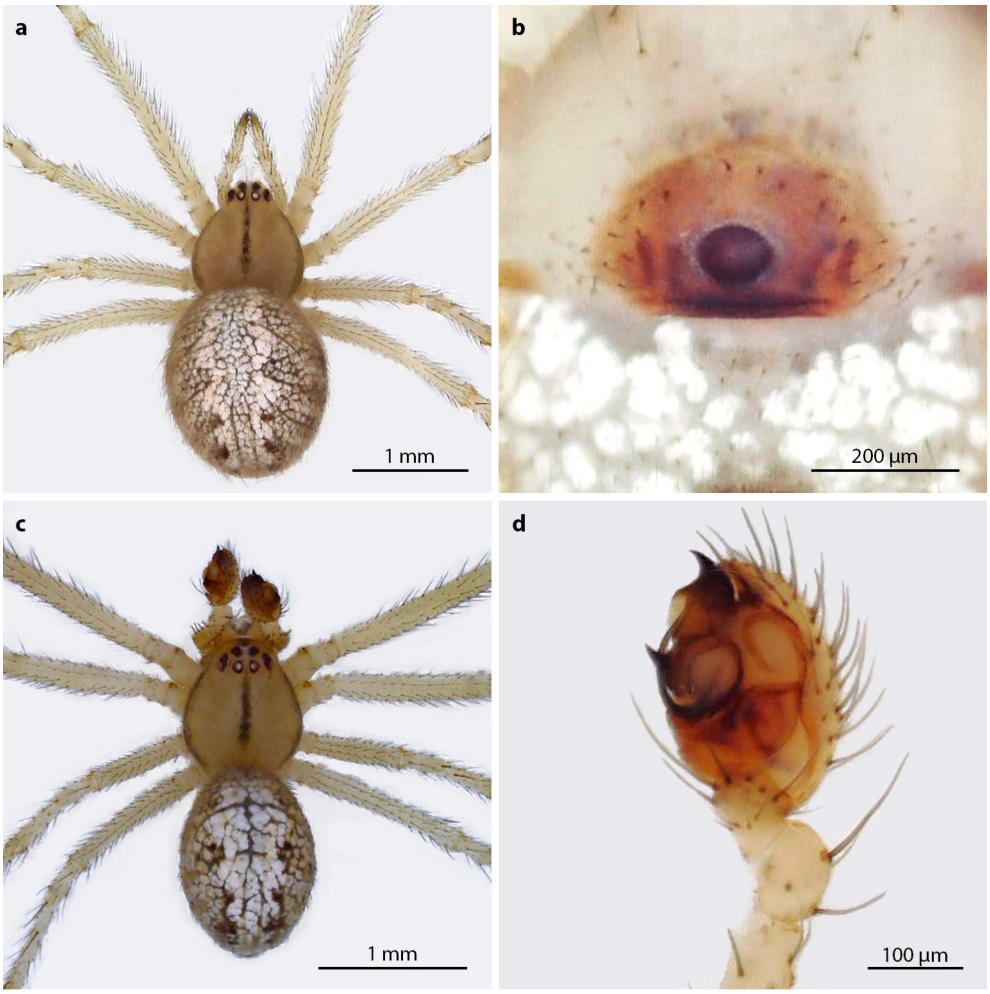


Fig 1: *Theridion uhligi* from the Czech Republic. **a-b.** female (a. habitus, dorsal; b. epigyne); **c-d.** male (c. habitus; d. pedipalp, retrolateral)

apophysis and conductor are prominent (Fig. 1d). The female epigyne is characterized by a median pit within the oval atrium (Fig. 1b). Another similar species, *Theridion cinereum*, differs in females by the S-shaped coiling of the copulatory ducts and in males by the distinctive structure of the apophyses on the palpal bulb.

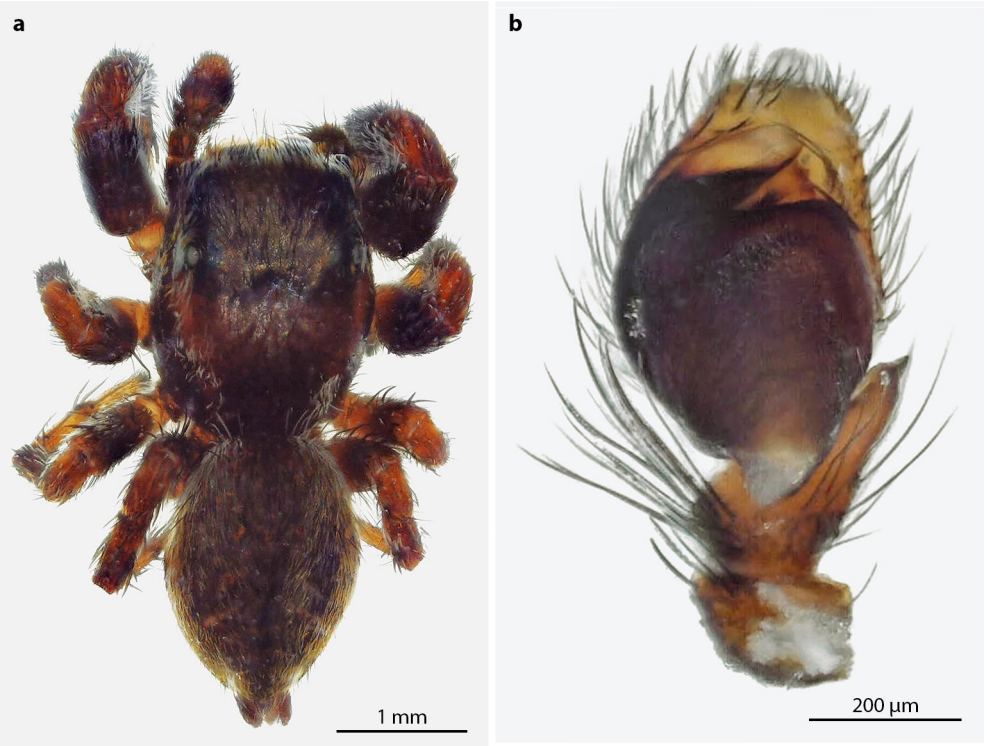
Distribution. *Theridion uhligi* has been documented in the literature from France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Russia (Nentwig et al. 2024) and Kazakhstan (Piterkina 2011). Within the genus *Theridion*, it is a rather conspicuous and easily distinguishable species, and therefore it seems that it is not a widespread and overlooked element of the Czech arachnofauna, but rather an endangered taxon with distinct habitat requirements. Potential recent expansion of the species' range may be detected in the future. However, based on occurrence records from other countries, this does not currently appear very likely.

Ecology. *Theridion uhligi* has been found across Europe on dry slope steppes (Martin 1974, Déjean 2012), heathland (Jocqué 1977, Bosmans & Janssen 1982, Prinsen 1996), in abandoned military areas of the Pannonian steppe character (Szinetár et al. 2015), in inland salt marshes (Gajdoš et al. 2019), in *Ephedra distachya* stands on sandy substrates (Duma 2008), and very rarely in more connected grassland habitats (Grbić et al. 2021). In Germany, *T. uhligi* is listed as a critically endangered species (Blick et al. 2016). Our material comes from slope vegetation on a loess steppe in the Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM (association *Astragalo exscapi-Crambetum tatariae* Klika, 1939), thus not deviating from the usually described ecology of the species. Although *Theridion uhligi* seems to be indifferent to the species composition of the vegetation, its loose character with bare surfaces is essential for its occurrence. The species weaves webs with a conical shelter near the ground. Like other species of stenotopic thermophilic cobweb spiders, *T. uhligi* apparently avoids making webs in excessively dense herbaceous vegetation (Prinsen 1996).

Phenology. Most adults are found from April to June, with rarer records from the summer period and single individuals also appearing in August (Prinsen 1996, Déjean 2012, Gajdoš et al. 2019). Prinsen (1996) suggested that records of adult males in late summer may be from the second generation. At the same time, he did not support the possibility of overwintering adults based on the finding of subadult females in May. Our sample of three males and one female dates from 24. June.

Evarcha michailovi Logunov, 1992

Description and diagnosis. The type specimen of *Evarcha michailovi* comes from the South Siberian Sayano-Shushenski Nature Reserve and was described in 1992. Differences in the morphology of the copulatory organs have been described by Prószyński (1982), who attributed them to intraspecific variation of *Evarcha laetabunda*, however, the study of more material revealed the established nature of the mentioned characters (Logunov 1992).



Fig, 2: Male of *Evarcha michailovi* from the Czech Republic. **a.** habitus, dorsal; **b.** pedipalp, ventral.

The species is similar to *E. laetabunda* in colouration (light longitudinal band of hairs on prosoma in the male, lighter colouration near the ocular field, orange clypeus, female similarly coloured with contrasting patches on the opisthosoma), but typically coloured males can be distinguished by the dark posteriorly tapering wedge-shaped patch on the brown coloured opisthosomal base (Fig. 2a). The structure of the copulatory organs is characterized by a thicker embolus with a backward whip-like coiled end (Fig. 2b), a convex tip of the tibial apophysis in retro-lateral view, and a more heavily sclerotized epigynal plate in females (Logunov 1992).

Distribution. In the original description, Logunov (1992) thought that *E. laetabunda* and *E. michailovi* were geographical vicariants separated mainly by the Ural Mountains, but only a few years later, the sympatric occurrence of both species in western Europe became apparent (Ledoux et al. 1996), and following a revision of older records and increased attention in examining material of *Evarcha* spp. the species' occurrence was also revealed in other European and Near Eastern countries (e.g. Yağmur et al. 2009, Martin 2014, Alderweireldt & Janssen 2016, Vogels et al. 2019 etc.). Today, the distribution of *E. michailovi* is known from western, central and eastern Europe, through Türkiye, Russia, the Caucasus, Kazakhstan, Central Asia and China (Nentwig et al. 2024). In many European countries (e.g. most Balkan countries), the species has been probably overlooked and it seems that this may also have been the reason for the absence of distribution data from the Czech Republic. The closest record of *E. michailovi* was found in the GBIF database, about 130 km away from the Pouzdřanská step – Kolby NNM in the Austrian Neusiedler See-Seewinkel National Park, near the village of Illmitz, and then near the Hungarian village of Pomáz, about 230 km away (GBIF.org 2026). Following the record presented here, a revision of Miller's collection (Kůrka 2001) was conducted, revealing misidentified material of *Evarcha michailovi* among specimens of *E. laetabunda* (Dolejš 2026 in press). This finding documents the long-term presence of the species at the locality and highlights the previously overlooked nature of its distribution (Fig. 3a).

Ecology. The species is most commonly reported from open xerothermic habitats such as heathland (Ledoux et al. 1996, Martin 2014, Vogels et al. 2019), abandoned military sites (Martin 2014), dry grassland (Yağmur et al. 2009) and hillside steppe (Logunov 1992). Habitat openness seems to be an important factor for the species' occurrence (Vogel et al. 2019). Shrub cover (e.g. *Calluna vulgaris*, *Alnus* sp., *Cotoneaster* sp.) also appears to be important (Logunov 1992, Ledoux et al. 1996). At the locality Pouzdřanská step – Kolby, the captured individual occurred in a part with scattered grassland (association *Astragalo exscapi-Crambetum tatariae* Klika, 1939) (Fig. 3b).

Phenology. Based on record data from temperate Europe, the peak of *E. michailovi* activity appears to be between May and August (Ledoux et al. 1996, Martin 2014). In the southern parts of the range, records have also been reported in April (Yağmur et al. 2009). A male from Pouzdranská steppe – Kolby was captured on 24. June.

Conclusions

The main aim of this paper was to report newly found species and significant occurrence records. However, our data also highlights the need for further faunistic surveys at already relatively well-studied sites and in renowned, frequently investigated regions such as South Moravia. Especially in the context of ongoing range expansion of thermophilic species, such faunistic investigations are likely to lead similarly exciting findings in the near future. Given the high similarity of *Evarcha michailovi* and the possibility of confusion with other species in the genus, a revision of historic material from similar xerothermic habitats is highly recommended.

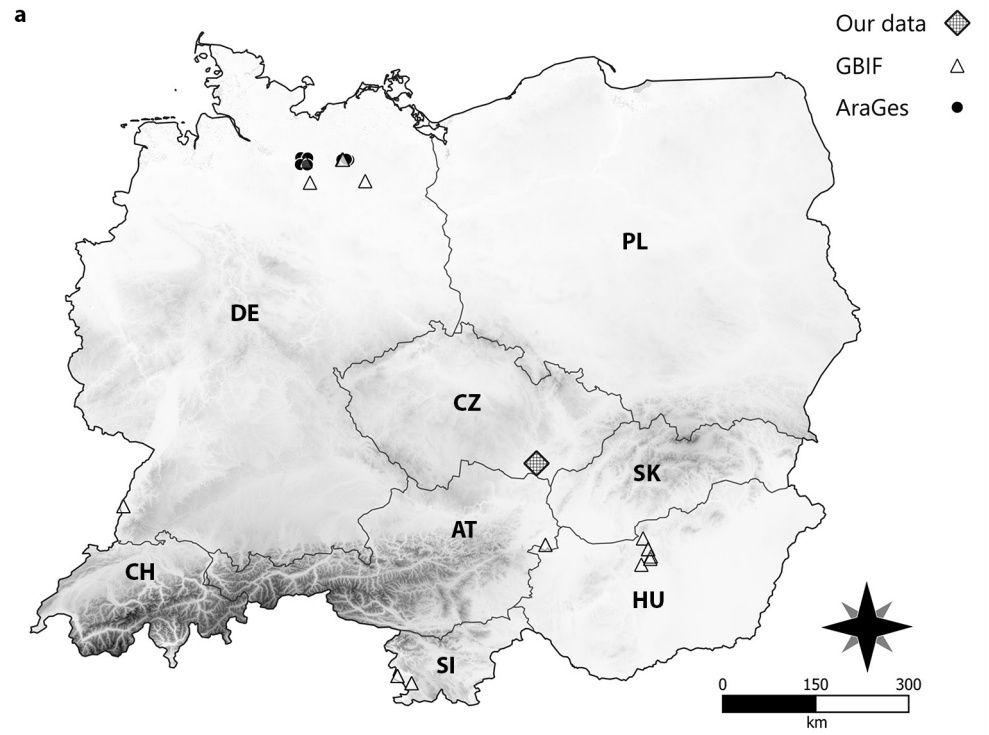


Fig. 3: Distribution and habitat of *Evarcha michailovi*. **a.** available distribution data from Central Europe. (white triangle – GBIF.org (2026); black circle – Arachnalogische Gesellschaft (2026) and new records from Czech Republic (grey square); AT – Austria; CH – Switzerland; CZ – Czech Republic; DE – Germany; HU – Hungary; PL – Poland; SI – Slovenia; SK – Slovakia); **b.** steppe vegetation of Pouzdřanská step – Kolby

Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Use of AI-based technologies

No generative AI and AI-assisted technologies were used.

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