

# Sphecidae and Crabronidae of the Al Thawrah Nature Reserve, northern Syria, with a checklist of the species known from Syria

(Insecta: Hymenoptera)

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**Abstract.** Fifty three species representing 34 genera of Sphecidae and Crabronidae were collected from the Al Thawrah Nature Reserve, northern Syria. Forty five species are new records for Syria. A checklist including 134 species of the digger wasps of Syria is also provided.

**Key words.** Sphecidae, Crabronidae, Al Thawrah Nature Reserve, Syria.

## Introduction

Little is known about the Sphecidae of Syria. The earliest information on the Hymenoptera of Syria was published by KOHL (1881, 1884, 1885, 1888), who included some records and described new species in the genera *Tachytes*, *Tachysphex*, *Cerceris* and *Ammophila* from Syria. KOHL (1905, 1906) also studied the Crabroninae and other Hymenoptera of the Palaearctic region with records from Syria and the Arabian region. KERVILLE (1926) listed 12 species of sphecid wasps from Syria. EBNER (1930) studied the Hymenoptera of Syria and Palestine. DE BEAUMONT (1968) revised the Sphecidae of the Palaearctic region with records from Syria. PULAWSKI (2007) included several records for species of the genus *Tachysphex* from Syria. Based on previous records, EL HARIRI (1968, 1971) listed a total of 458 species of Hymenoptera from Syria, including 38 sphecids. These lists require verification and updating based on recent nomenclatural changes.

In the Middle East, the digger wasps of Palestine, Arabia and Turkey have been extensively studied (GUICHARD 1988a & b, 1989, 1994, DE BEAUMONT & BYTINSKI-SALZ 1955, 1959). Most recently, the most comprehensive treatment of the Sphecidae and Crabronidae of Turkey was published by LJUBOMIROV & YILDIRIM (2008).

SCHMID-EGGER (2000, 2002, 2004) published a series of generic revisions (*Entomosericus*, *Gorytes* and *Bembecinus*) with records from Syria and the Middle East. DOLLFUSS (2004a, b, 2006, 2008a, b) included several records of digger wasps from Syria deposited at the "Biologiezentrum Linz" in Linz, Austria.

The present study is the first attempt to identify the Sphecidae and Crabronidae of the Al Thawrah Nature Reserve, northern Syria, with a list of all the species recorded from Syria.