

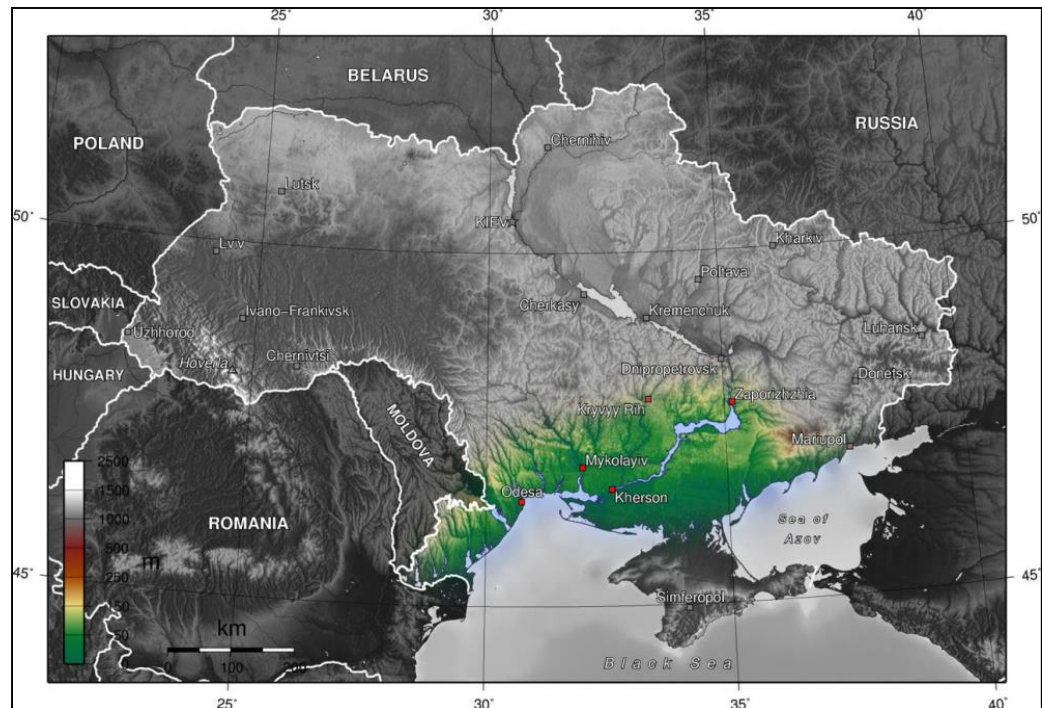
Rare erpobdellids species (Erpobdellidae) of Black Sea Lowland: Biogeography and evolutionary history



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Black Sea Lowland

Black Sea Lowland is an area of distribution of a number of species whose ranges extend much southerly, which is also quite applicable to erpobdellid leeches



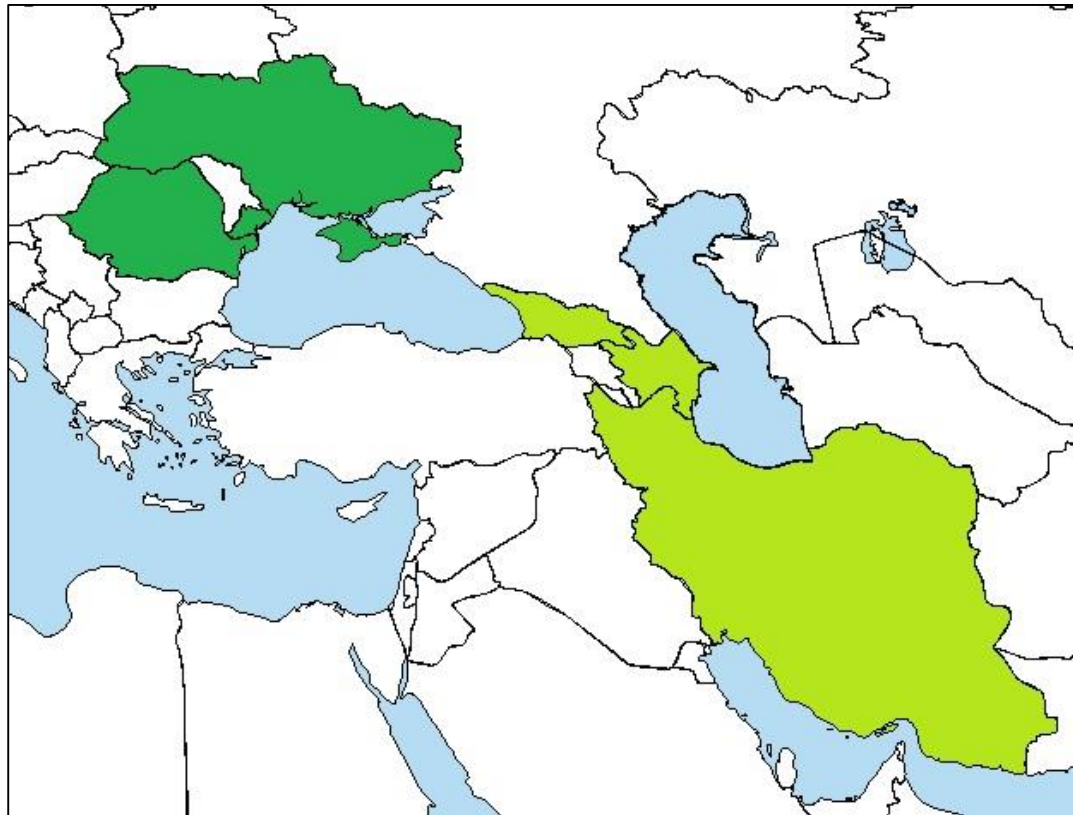
Dina stschegolewi (Lukin & Epshtein, 1960)

Eurybiontic species, which was recorded in different habitats across the northern coast of the Black Sea

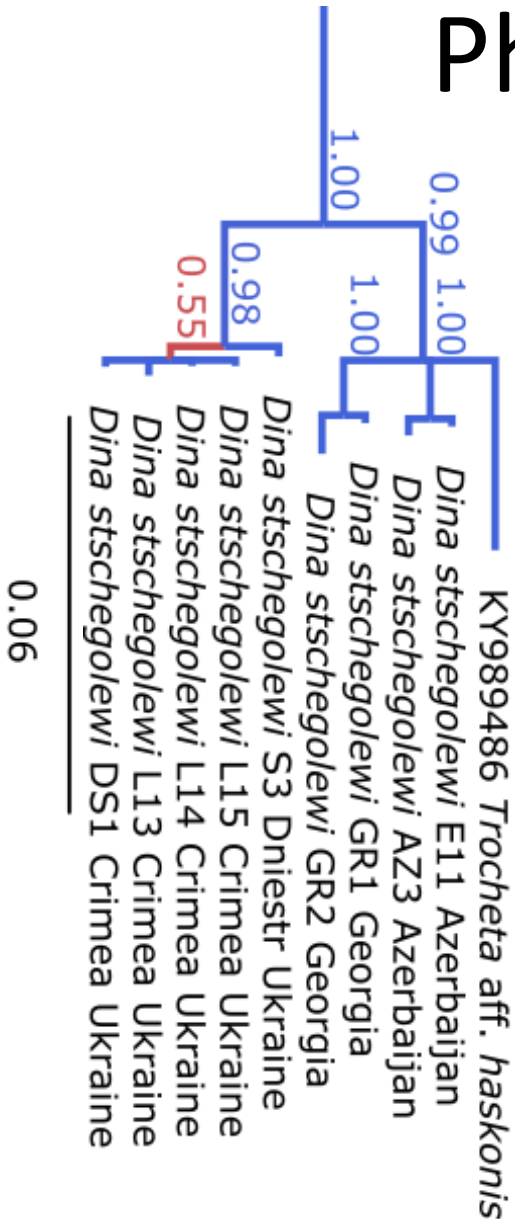


Distribution

Dina stschegolewi is distributed in southern Ukraine, eastern Romania, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran



Phylogenetic analysis



- Eastern and western clades of *D. stschegolewi* diverge substantially, which may indicate speciation
- Genetic diversity of the western phylogroup is significantly lower, which clearly shows its Caucasian origin

Trocheta danastrica Stschegolew, 1938

- The largest European leech
- Lives in the ground of riverbanks



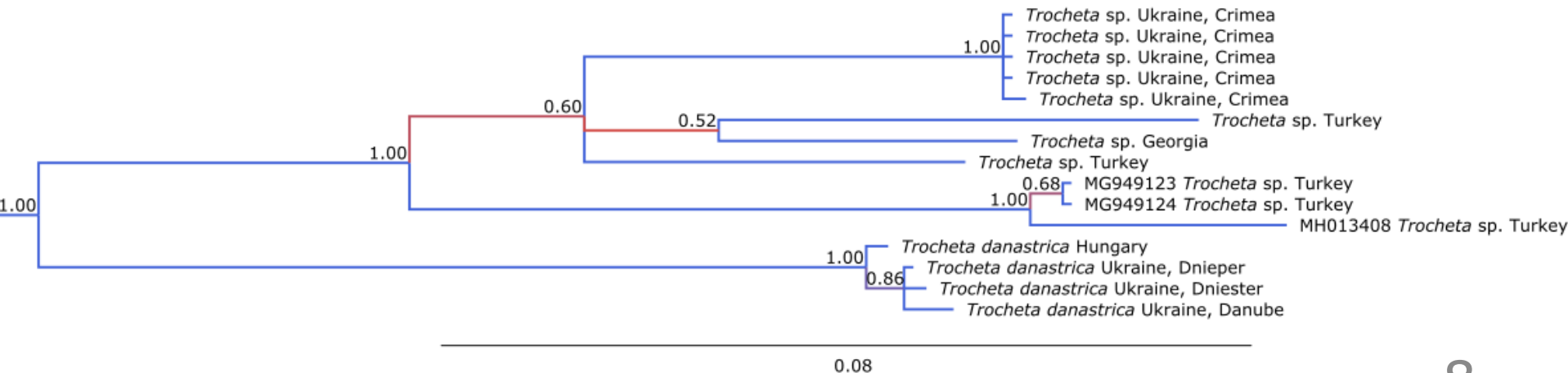
Distribution

- The range of this species includes southern Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, eastern Austria and Serbia
- The occurrence of this species in Romania, Crimea, the Southern Caucasus, Anatolia and Greece was challenged by Grosser & Epshtein (2009)



Phylogenetic analysis

- We disproved the occurrence of *T. danastrica* in the Crimean Peninsula, the South Caucasus and northern Anatolia
- Information on the geographical distribution of this species suggests its Pannonian origin



Conclusion

The Black Sea lowland is a crossing point of the Balkan and the Crimean-Caucasian faunas of erpobdellids.

The Pontic basin seems to be a biographical region of high endemism and biodiversity.